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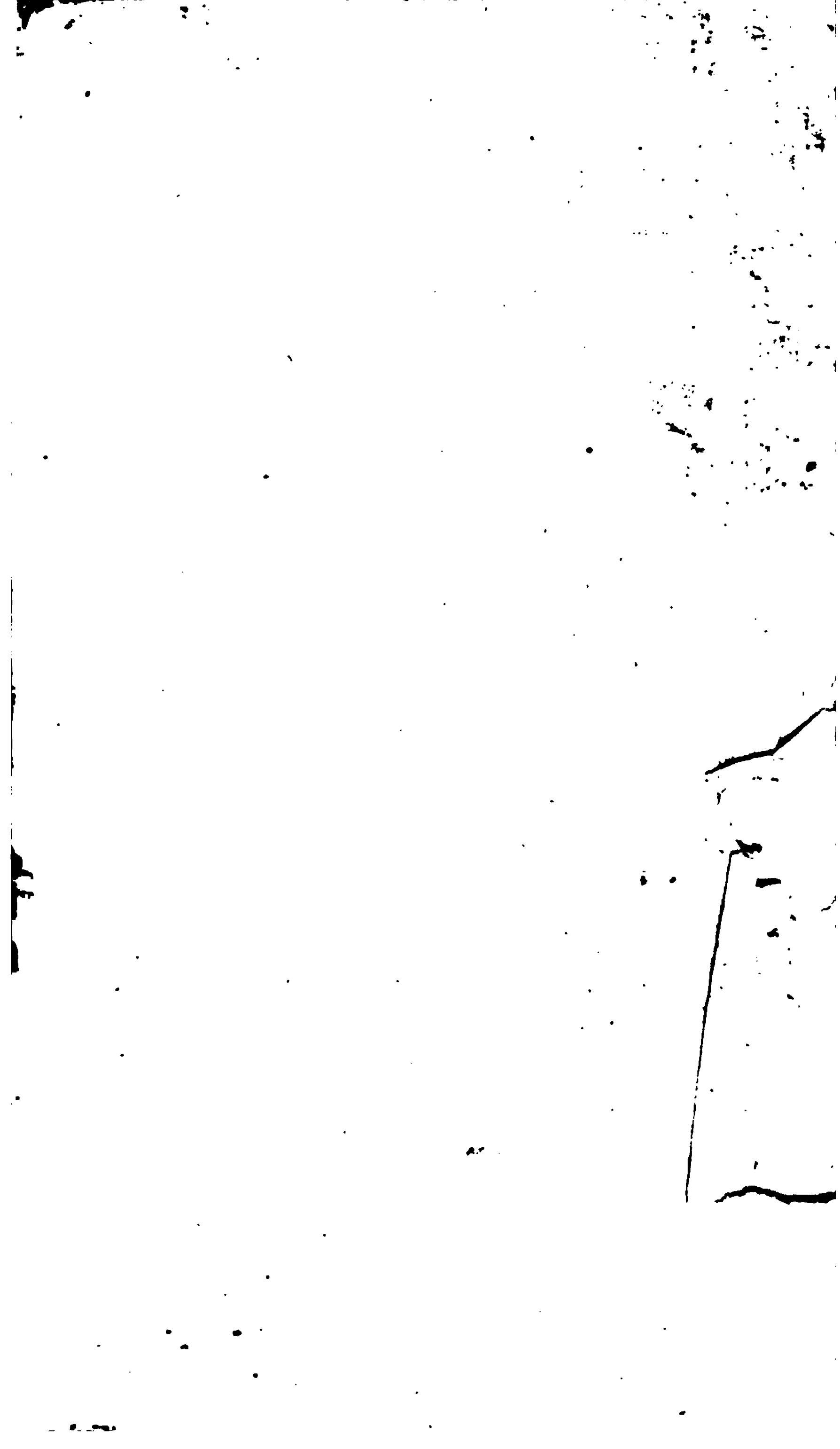
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L E T T E R S

James TO AND FROM THE LATE *Gentleman*

Samuel Johnson, LL.D.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

S O M E P O E M S

NEVER BEFORE PRINTED.

PUBLISHED

FROM THE ORIGINAL MSS. IN HER POSSESSION,

By HESTER LYNCH PIOZZI.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

V O L. I.

2 vols in 1

D U B L I N:

PRINTED FOR MESSRS. R. MONCRIEFFE, L. WHITE,
P. BYRNE, P. WOGAN, W. PORTER, H.
COLBERT, J. MOORE, J. JONES.

M.DCC.LXXXVIII.

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P R E F A C E.

THEY who solicit the favour of the Publick are often led to lament the instability of its regard; and volumes have been written to deter men from trying ever to obtain that which is acknowledged so difficult to keep: yet numbers still endeavour, in spite of admonition, to sit upon themselves that fairy garland, which they have so often seen snatched by malice from the head of the unwary, dropt by a sudden toss from the temples of the arrogant, and fading through mere negligence round the brows of the sluggard. The obsidional crown however, composed only of that grass which grew in the place besieged, — may still, as in the days of ancient Rome perhaps—be worn while it lasts without envy; nor can I form pretensions to any higher reward, for having made known the true character of a dead friend, by printing his opinions, sentences, and letters, which best explain it.

An Editor's duty is indeed that of most danger and least renown through all the ranks of literary warfare; all merit is attributed (and justly) to the author; for faults, the person who publishes must be responsible.

It is difficult enough too, in a previous address, to defend one's self from censures, of which we yet know not the form and force; the first and greatest danger is here indeed little to be dreaded as these letters will doubtless be deemed authentick, even by those who profess themselves least pleased with their perusal—and he was accounted among the wisest of the ancients, who chose rather *to displease by truth, than give delight by falsehood.*

None but domestick and familiar events can be expected from a private correspondence; no reflections but such as they excite can be found there; yet whoever turns away disgusted by the insipidity with which this, and I suppose every correspondence must naturally and almost necessarily begin—will here be likely to lose some genuine pleasure, and some useful knowledge of what our heroic Milton was himself contented to respect, as

That which before thee lies in daily life.

And should I be charged with obtruding trifles on the Public, I might reply, that the meanest animals preserved in amber become of value to those who form collections of natural history, that the fish found in Monte Bolca serve as proofs of sacred writ, and that the cart-wheel stuck in the rock of Tivoli, is now found useful in computing the rotation of the earth.

When

P R E F A C E.

Were I disposed to deprecate future criticism, I might here undertake the defence of Dr. Johnson's sentiments, as they will be found strewed up and down these volumes ; but for the Editor it is sufficient, that they are the sentiments of him who, when living, above all men knew how to compel acquiescence, even from the few who forbore a loud and clamorous applause. The letters therefore remain just as he wrote them ; and I did not like to mutilate such as contained either sallies of humour or precepts of morality, because they might be mingled with family affairs ; nor will I much extend myself in empty apologies for letting such passages stand which at worst may serve to gratify petty curiosity, while readers who search for something better will not long be detained, and consequently can complain but little.

It has been frequently lamented, that we have few letters in our language printed from genuine copies—scarce any from authors of eminence ; such as were prepared for the press by their writers, have forfeited all title to the name of letters ; nor are I believe ever considered as familiar chat spread upon paper for the advantage or entertainment of a distant friend. Here might I add much about epistolary style, echoing perhaps with less novelty than pleasure, the just praises of Scvigné's tenderness, and Maintenon's piety ; but who could hope to add one useful observation

vation to those contained in No. 152 of the Rambler? It were easy to dilute the salt of Johnson's expressions by pages of my own insipidity; but very different is the compensation deserved by those who received my Anecdotes with a degree of approbation I had not dared to hope.

May these letters in some measure pay my debts of gratitude! they will not surely be the *first*, the *only* thing written by Johnson, with which our nation has not been pleased. The good taste by which our countrymen are distinguished, will lead them to prefer the native thoughts and unstudied phrases scattered over these pages, to the more laboured elegance of his other works—as bees have been observed to reject roses, and fix upon the wild fragrance of a neighbouring heath. I have however been attentive to avoid paining many individuals, even for the gratification of that Public to which I am much more obliged—for duty bids me defend an enemy from censure, while inclination eagerly brings forward the praises of every friend.

But on revival of these letters when at last they were collected, some notes began to appear almost necessary; partly therefore to avoid writing what could in that form have given little satisfaction, partly from finding in my own answers to him, a better comment on his meaning than I could *now* have written, I was induced to print trifles not
origi-

originally intended for the Public, on whose indulgence I depend for protection. Mean time, to such of our intimate companions as have been spared by death, this correspondence can scarcely fail to be interesting—yet even from kindness some objections may be feared: for though all delight in hanging up a handsome portrait of their friends——many refuse admission in a fine apartment to waxen figures modelled from the life, and dressed with such minuteness of propriety—they startle while they please.

The verses from Boethius will be accepted as a literary rarity; it was about the year 1765 when our Doctor told me that he would translate the consolations of Philosophy, but said I must do the Odes for him, and produce one every Thursday; he was obeyed; and in commending some, and correcting others, about a dozen Thursdays passed away.—Of those which are given here however, he did many entirely himself; and of the others—I suffered my own lines to be printed, that his might not be lost. The work was broken off without completion, because some gentleman, whose name I have forgotten, took it in hand; and against him, for reasons of delicacy—Johnson did not chuse to contend.

Here, however, shall cease my explanations and apologies; the furling up of that curtain which keeps Shakespeare and Siddons from our sight--though the allegorical figures
upon

upon it were painted by Pouffin, would be ever impatiently sighed for: and the audience might be reasonably enough expected to clatter their sticks, till *As-you like it* were presented to their view.

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~~THE FIRST LETTER TO MR. THRALE~~

L E T T E R S

TO AND FROM

Samuel Johnson, L. L. D.

L E T T E R I. *

To MRS. THRALE.

MADAM,

London, Aug. 13, 1765.

IF you have really so good an opinion of me as you express, it will not be necessary to inform you, how unwillingly I miss the opportunity of coming to Brighthelmston in Mr. Thrale's company; or, since I cannot do what I wish first, how eagerly I shall catch the second degree of pleasure, by coming to you and him, as soon as I can dismiss my work from my hands.

I am afraid to make promises even to myself; but I hope that the week after the next will be the end of my present business. When business is done, what remains but pleasure? and where should pleasure be sought, but under Mrs. Thrale's influence?

* This is the first letter ever received by the Editor from Dr. Johnson, who was at that time engaged in preparing for the press his Edition of Shakespeare.

2 LETTERS TO AND FROM

Do not blame me for a delay by which I must suffer so much, and by which I suffer alone. If you cannot think I am good, pray think I am mending, and that in time I may deserve to be,

DEAR MADAM,

Your most obedient, and

Most humble servant,

SAM. JOHNSON.



L E T T E R H . •

TO MRS. SALUSBURY •.

M A D A M .

February 14. 1767.

I HOPE it will not be considered as one of the mere formalities of life, when I declare, that to have heard nothing of Mrs. Thrale for so long a time, has given me pain. My uneasiness is sincere, and therefore deserves to be relieved. I do not write to Mrs. Thrale, lest it should give her trouble at an inconvenient time. I beg, Dear Madam, to know how she does; and shall honestly partake of your grief if she is ill, and of your pleasure if she is well. I am,

M A D A M ,

Your most obliged, and

Most humble servant,

SAM. JOHNSON.

• Mother to the Editor.

LETTER III.

TO MRS. THRALLE.

MADAM,

Lichfield, July 20, 1767.

THOUGH I have been away so much longer than I purposed or expected, I have found nothing that withdraws my affections from the friends whom I left behind, or which makes me less desirous of reposing at that place which your kindness and Mr. Thrall's allows me to call my home.

Miss Lucy * is more kind and civil than I expected, and has raised my esteem by many excellencies very noble and resplendent, though a little discoloured by hoary virginity. Every thing else recalls to my remembrance years, in which I proposed what, I am afraid, I have not done, and promised myself pleasure which I have not found. But complaint can be of no use; and why then should I depress your hopes by my lamentations? I suppose it is the condition of humanity to design what never will be done, and to hope what never will be obtained. But among the vain hopes, let me not number the hope which I have, of being long, Dear Madam,

Your, &c.

* Miss Lucy Porter, daughter to Dr. Johnson's wife by a former husband.

LETTER IV.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

Lichfield, Oct. 3, 1767.

YOU are returned, I suppose, from Bright-helmstone, and this letter will be read at Streat-ham.

—Sine ux, liber, hic in urbem.

I have felt in this place something like the shackles of destiny. There has not been one day of pleasure, and yet I cannot get away. But when I do come, I perhaps shall not be easily persuaded to pass again to the other side of Styx, to venture myself on the irremovable road. I long to see you, and all those of whom the sight is included in seeing you. *Nil mihi rescribas*; for though I have no right to say, *ipsa veni*, I hope that *ipse veniam*. Be pleased to make my compliments.

I am, &c.

LETTER V.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

March 3, 1768.

I THOUGHT Mr. W—— had been secured. Since what I have done is ineffectual, I doubt the
power

Dr. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

power of my solicitation; but, to leave nothing undone, I have written to him.

Mr. Pennick I have seen, but with so little approach to intimacy that I could not have recollected his name; yet to him I have inclosed a letter, which, after this information, you may use as you think is best. I suppose it can do no harm.

Do you think there is any danger, that you are thus anxious for a single vote? Pray let me know, as often as you can find a little time; for I love to see a letter.

Be pleased to make my compliments to Mr. Thrale and Mrs. Salusbury, and Miss Hetty, and every body. How does the poor little maid?

I am, &c.

Dr. JOHNSON'S Letter to Mr. PENNICK in favour of
Mr. THRALE;

S I R,

I am flattered by others with an honour with which I dare not presume to flatter myself, that of having obtained so much of your kindness or regard, as that my recommendation of a candidate for Southwark may have some influence in determining your vote at the approaching election. As a man is willing to believe well of himself, I now indulge my vanity, by soliciting your vote and interest for Mr. Thrale, whose encomium I shall make very compendiously, by telling you that you would most certainly vote for him if you knew

6 L E T T E R S T O A N D F R O M

knew him. I ought to have waited on you with this request, even though my right to make it had been greater; but, as the election approaches, and I know not how long I shall be detained here, I hope you will not impute this unceremonious treatment to any want of respect in, Sir,

Your most obedient servant.



L E T T E R V I.

To M R S. T H R A L E.

M A D A M,

March 14, 1768.

MY last letter came a day after its time, by being carried too late to the post. This I mention, that you may not suspect me of negligence. I wrote at the same time to Mr. W. in more forcible terms, than perhaps he thinks I had a right to: he has not answered me. He and his wife are on such terms, that I know not whether his inclination can be inferred from her's.

If I can be of any use, I will come directly to London; but if Mr. Thrale thinks himself certain, I have no doubt. That they all express the same certainty, has very little effect on those who know how many men are confident without certainty, and positive without confidence. We have not any reason to suspect Mr. Thrale of deceiving us or himself.

I hope all our friends at Streatham are well; and am glad to hope that the poor maid will recover. When the mind is drawn toward a dying-bed,

bed, how small a thing is an election? But on death we cannot be always thinking, and, I suppose, we need not. The thought is very dreadful!

This little dog does nothing, but I hope he will mend; he is now reading Jack the Giant-killer. Perhaps so noble a narrative may rouse in him the soul of enterprise.

I am, &c.



L E T T E R VII.

To MRS. THRALE.

MADAM,

March 18, 1768.

NO part of Mr. Thrale's troubles would have been troublesome to me, if any endeavours of mine could have made them less. But I know not that I could have done more for him, than, in your approaching danger, I can do for you. I wish you both well, and have little doubt of seeing you both emerge from your difficulties.

When the election is decided, I entreat to be immediately informed; and when you retreat to Streatham, if I shall not have returned to town, I hope that Mrs. Salusbury will favour me now and then with an account of you, when you can less conveniently give it of yourself. To be able to do nothing in the exigence of a friend is an uneasy state, but in the most pressing exigencies it is the natural state of humanity, and in all has been commonly that of, Dear Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T.

LETTERS TO AND FROM

LETTER VII.

TO MRS. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Oxford, March 24, 1758.

YOU serve me very sensibly. You may write every day to this place; and yet I do not know what is the event of the Southwark election, though, I am sure, you ought to believe that I am very far from indifference about it. Do; let me know as soon as you can.

Our election was yesterday. Every possible influence of hope and fear was, I believe, enforced on this occasion; the slaves of power, and the solicitors of favour, were driven hither from the remotest corners of the kingdom, but *judex honestum prætulit utili*. The virtue of Oxford has once more prevailed.

The death of Sir Walter Bagot, a little before the election, left them no great time to deliberate, and they therefore joined to Sir Roger Newdigate their old representative, an Oxfordshire gentleman, of no name, no great interest, nor perhaps any other merit, than that of being on the right side. Yet when the poll was numbered, it produced

For Sir R. Newdigate	352
Mr. Page	296
Mr. Jenkinson	198
Dr. Hay	62

Of this I am sure you must be glad; for, without enquiring into the opinions or conduct of any party, it must be for ever pleasing to see men adhering to their principles against their interest, especially

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pecially when you consider that these voters are poor, and never can be much less poor but by the favour of those whom they are now opposing.

I am, &c.



LETTER IX.

To Mrs. THRALE.

MADAM,

Oxford, April 19, 1768.

IF I should begin with telling you what is very true, that I have of late been very much disordered, you might perhaps think that in the next line I should impute this disorder to my distance from you; but I am not yet well enough to contrive such stratagems of compliment. I have been really very bad, and am glad that I was not at Streatham, where I should have been troublesome to you, and you could have given no help to me.

I am not, however, without hopes of being better, and therefore hear with great pleasure of the welfare of those from whom I always expect to receive pleasure when I am capable of receiving it, and think myself much favoured that you made so much haste to tell me of your recovery.

I design to love little Miss Nanny very well; but you must let us have a Missy some other time. I suppose the Borough bells rung for the young lady's arrival. I hope she will be happy. I will not welcome her with any words of ill omen. She

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She will certainly be happy, if she be as she and all friends are wished to be by, Madam,

Your, &c.



L E T T E R X.

T O M R S . T H R A L E .

M A D A M ,

Oxford, April 28th, 1768.

IT is indeed a great alleviation of sickness to be nursed by a mother, and it is a comfort in return to have the prospect of being nursed by a daughter, even at that hour when all human attention must be vain. From that social desire of being valuable to each other, which produces kindness and officiousness, it proceeds, and must proceed, that there is some pleasure in being able to give pain. To roll the weak eye of helpless anguish, and see nothing on any side but cold indifference, will, I hope, happen to none whom I love or value; it may tend to withdraw the mind from life, but has no tendency to kindle those affections which fit us for a purer and a nobler state.

Yet when any man finds himself disposed to complain with how little care he is regarded, let him reflect how little he contributes to the happiness of others, and how little for the most part, he suffers from their pains. It is perhaps not to be lamented, that those sollicitudes are not long nor frequent, which must commonly be vain; nor can we wonder that, in a state in which all have so much to feel of their own evils, very few have
leisure

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 11

leisure for those of another. However, it is so ordered, that few suffer for want of assistance; and that kindness which could not assist, however pleasing, may be spared.

These reflections do not grow out of any discontent at C—'s behaviour: he has been neither negligent nor troublesome; nor do I love him less for having been ill in his house. This is no small degree of praise. I am better, having scarce eaten for seven days. I shall come home on Saturday.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R XI.

To MRS. T H R A L E.

M A D A M, May 23d, 1768.

THOUGH I purpose to come home to-morrow, I could not omit even so long, to tell you how much I think myself favoured by your notice. Every man is desirous to keep those friends whom he is proud to have gained, and I count the friendship of your house among the felicities of life.

I thank God that I am better, and am at least within hope of being as well as you have ever known me. Let me have your prayers.

I am, &c.

L E T.

LETTER XII.

To MRS. T H R A L L.

MADAM,

June 17, 1768.

I KNOW that you were not displeased to find me gone abroad, when you were so kind as to favour me with a visit. I find it useful to be moving; but whithersoever I may wander, I shall not, I hope, leave behind me that gratitude and respect, with which your attention to my health, and tenderness for my weakness, have impressed my heart. May you be long before you want the kindness which you have shown to, Madam,

Your, &c.

—————
 <-----> <-----> <-----> <-----> <----->

 LETTER XIII.

To MRS. T H R A L L.

MADAM,

Nov. 11, 1768.

I AM sincerely sorry for you both; nor is my grief disinterested; for I cannot but think the life of Mrs. Salusbury some addition to the happiness of all that know her. How much soever, I wish to see you, I hope you will give me no pleasure at the expence of one to whom you have so much greater reason to be attentive.

I am, &c.

L E T.

LETTER XIV.

To Mrs. T H R A L L E.

MADAM,

Dec. 2, 1768.

I CAN readily find no paper that is not ruled for juridical use. You will wonder that I have not written, and indeed I wonder too; but I have been oddly put by my purpose. If my omission has given you any uneasiness, I have the mortification of paining that mind which I would most wish to please. I am not, I thank God, worse than when I went; and you have no hope that I should grow better here. But I will show myself to-morrow, and only write in hope that my letter will come before me, and that you will have forgiven the negligence of, Madam,

Yours, &c.



LETTER XV.

To Miss F L I N T.*

MADEMOISELLE,

A Londres, Mars 31, 1769.

IL faut avouer que la lettre que vous m'avez fait l'honneur de m'écrire, a été long-tems sans réponse. Voici mon apologie. J'ai été affligé d'une maladie de violence peu supportable, & d'une len-

* Miss Flint was a very young lady, who had translated his Strictures at the end of Shakespeare's Plays.

teur

teur bien ennuiant. Tout état a ses droits particuliers. On compte parmi les droits d'un malade celui de manquer aux offices de respect, et aux devoirs de reconnoissance. Gêné par ses douleurs, il ne sçait veiller qu'à soi-même: Il ne pense qu'à se soulager, et à se rétablir, peu attentif à tout autre soin, et peu sensible à la gloire d'être traduit par une main telle que la vôtre.

Néanmoins, Mademoiselle, votre mérite auroit exigé que je m'efforçasse de vous rendre grâces de vos égards, si je l'avois pu faire sans y mêler des querelles. Mais comment m'empêcher de me plaindre de ces appas par lesquels vous avez gagné sur l'esprit de Mademoiselle Reynolds jusqu'à ce qu'elle ne se souvient plus ni de sa patrie ni de ses amis. C'est peu de nous louer, c'est peu de répandre nos ouvrages par des traductions les plus belles, pendant que vous nous privez du plaisir de voir Mademoiselle Reynolds & de l'écouter. Enfin, Mademoiselle, il faut être moins aimable, afin que nous vous aimions plus.

Je suis,

M A D E M O I S E L L E ,

Vôtre très humble, &

Obéissant Serviteur.

L E T.

LETTER XVI.

TO MRS. THRALE.

MADAM, May 18, 1769.

NOW I know you want to be forgetting me, but I do not want to be forgotten, and would rather send your letters, like * *Presle's*, than suffer myself to slip out of your memory. That I should forget you, there is no danger; for I have time enough to think both by night and day; and he that has leisure for any thing that is not present, always turns his mind to that which he likes best.

One reason for thinking on you is, that I must for a while be content with thinking; for our affairs will not suffer me to come home till Saturday.

I am, &c.

LETTER XVII.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM, New Inn Hall, June 27, 1769.

I HAD your note sent hither; and can easily spare the pineapple, and be satisfied with the reason for which it was sent. Though I hope I shall never want any new memorials to keep you in my mind,

* Dean Swift, who signs himself *Presle* in his Familiar Letters.

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mind, yet I am glad to find you solicitous not to be forgotten, though I should not deserve to be remembered if there could be any reason for such solicitude.

The pain and sickness which you suffer, you may bear to feel and I to think on with less impatience on your part, and less grief on mine, because the crisis is within view. I will not increase your uneasiness with mine. I hope I grow better. I am very cautious, and very cautious. Whether fear and caution do much for me, I can hardly tell. Time will perhaps do more than both.

I purpose to come to town in a few days, but I suppose I must not see you. I will, however, call on Mr. Thrall in the Borough, and shall hope to be soon informed that your trouble is over, and that you are well enough to resume your care for that which yet disturbs, and which your kindness sometimes alleviate.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R X V I I I .

T O M R S . T H R A L L E .

M A D A M ,

Oxford, June 29, 1769.

HESIOD, who was very wise in his time, though nothing to such wise people as we, says, that the evil of the worst times has some good mingled with it. Hesiod was in the right. These times are not such to my mind; I am not well; but in these times you are safe, and have brought a pretty little Miss. I always wished it might be a Miss, and now that wish is gratified, nothing remains

mains but that I entreat you to take care of yourself; for whatever number of girls or boys you may give us, we are far from being certain that any of them will ever do for us what you can do; it is certain that they cannot now do it, and the ability which they want, they are not likely to gain but by your precepts and your example; by an example of excellence, and by the admonitions of truth.

Mr. Thrale tells me, that my furlough is shortened; I am always ready to obey orders; I have not yet found any place from which I shall not willingly depart to come back to you. I am, Dearest Lady,

Your, &c.



LETTER XIX.

TO MR. THRALE.

SIR, New Inn Hall, Oxford, June 29, 1769.

THAT Mrs. Thrale is safely past through her danger is an event at which nobody but yourself can rejoice more than I rejoice. I think myself very much honoured by the choice that you have been pleased to make of me to become related to the little maiden. Let me know when she will want me, and I will very punctually wait on her.

I am, &c.

18. LETTERS TO AND FROM

LETTER XX

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAREST MADAM,

July 6, 1769.

THOUGH I am to come home to-morrow, I would not let the alarming letter which I received this morning be without notice. Dear Madam, take all possible care of your health. How near we always are to danger! I hope your danger is now past; but that fear, which is the necessary effect of danger, must remain always with us. I hope my little Miss is well. Surely I shall be very fond of her. In a year and half she will run and talk. But how much ill may happen in a year and half! Let us however hope for the better side of possibility, and think that I may then and afterwards continue to be, Madam,

Your, &c.



LETTER XXI.

TO MRS. THRALE.

MADAM,

Lichfield, August 14, 1769.

ISET out on Thursday morning, and found my companion, to whom I was very much a stranger, more agreeable than I expected. We went cheerfully forward, and passed the night at Coventry. We came in late, and went out early; and therefore I did not send for my cousin Tom; but I design to make him some amends for the omission.

Next

Next day we came early to Lucy, who was, I believe, glad to see us. She had saved her best gooseberries upon the tree for me; and, as Steele says, *I was neither too proud nor too wise* to gather them. I have rambled a very little *inter fontes et flumina nota*, but I am not yet well. They have cut down the trees in George Lane. Evelyn, in his book of Forest Trees, tells us of wicked men that cut down trees, and never prospered afterwards; yet nothing has deterred these audacious aldermen from violating the Hamadryads of George Lane. As an impartial traveller I must however tell, that in Stow-street, where I left a draw-well, I have found a pump; but the lading-well in this ill-fated George Lane lies shamefully neglected.

I am going to-day or to-morrow to Ashbourne; but I am at a loss how I shall get back in time to London. Here are only chance coaches, so that there is no certainty of a place. If I do not come, let it not hinder your journey. I can be but a few days behind you; and I will follow in the Brighthelmstone coach. But I hope to come.

I took care to tell Miss Porter, that I have got another Lucy. I hope she is well. Tell Mrs. Salusbury, that I beg her stay at Streatham, for little Lucy's sake.

I am, &c.

29 LETTERS TO AND FROM

L E T T E R XXII.

To MRS. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Lichfield, July, 7, 1770.

I THOUGHT I should have heard something to-day about Streatham; but there is no letter; and I need some consolation, for Rheumatism is come again, though in a less degree than formerly. I reckon to go next week to Ashbourne, and will try to bring you the dimensions of the great bull. The skies and the ground are all so wet, that I have been very little abroad; and Mrs. Aston is from home, so that I have no motive to walk. When she is at home, she lives on the top of Stow Hill, and I commonly climb up to see her once a-day. There is nothing there now but the empty nest. I hope Streatham will long be the place.

To write to you about Lichfield is of no use, for you never saw Stow-pool, nor Borowcop-hill. I believe you may find Borow or Borotghcop-hill in my Dictionary, under *cop* or *cab*. Nobody here knows what the name imports.

I have taken the liberty to enclose a letter; for, though you do not know it, three groats make a shilling. I am, Dearest Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T-

LETTER XXIII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

MADAM,

Lichfield, July 11, 1770.

SINCE my last letter nothing extraordinary has happened. Rheumatism, which has been very troublesome, is grown better. I have not yet seen Dr. Taylor, and July runs fast away. I shall not have much time for him, if he delays much longer to come or send. Mr. Grene, the apothecary, has found a book, which tells who paid levies in our parish, and how much they paid, above an hundred years ago. Do you not think we study this book hard? Nothing is like going to the bottom of things. Many families that paid the parish-rates are now extinct, like the race of Hercules. *Pulvis et umbra funus*. What is nearest us touches us most. The passions rise higher at domestic than at imperial tragedies. I am not wholly unaffected by the revolutions of Sadler-street; nor can forbear to mourn a little when old names vanish away, and new come into their place.

Do not imagine, Madam, that I wrote this letter for the sake of these philosophical meditations; for when I began it, I had neither Mr. Grene, nor his book, in my thoughts; but was resolved to write, and did not know what I had to send, but my respects to Mrs. Salusbury, and Mr. Thrale, and Harry, and the Misses. I am, Dearest Madam,

Your, &c.

LET-

LETTER XXIV.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM, Lichfield, July 14, 1770.

WHEN any calamity is suffered, the first thing to be remembered is, how much has been escaped. The house might have been entered by ruffians when Mrs. Salusbury had been in it, and who can tell what horrors might have followed!

I thought you would in time compliment your compliments away. Nothing goes well when I am from you, for when I am from you the house is robbed*. You must therefore suppose, that if I had been with you, the robbery would not have been. But it was not our gang. I should have had no interest.

Your loss, I am afraid, is very great; but the loss of patience would have been greater.

My rheumatism torments me very much, though not as in the winter. I think I shall go to Ashbourne on Monday or Tuesday.

You will be pleased to make all my compliments.

I am, &c.

* Mrs. Salusbury's house in town was robbed of goods and linen to a large amount, while she was absent at Streatham.

LETTER XXV.

MRS. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

S I R,

July 17, 1770.

IT is unlucky enough that my power of acknowledging and returning civility should fail just now, when you are daily giving me occasion to exert it; unmercifully indeed, and I fear with some wicked intention, to wear it quite out.

I see your gang;—the heads of it, however, have for this time, as you say, avoided suspicion. You have an *alibi* ready to prove; and Mr. Barretti's book shews, that he has been employed among more entertaining papers: 'tis a most pleasing performance, and meets with eager readers in our house: even Mrs. * * * * * is sure that *such* a gentleman must keep a carriage, though not so fine a one, *no sure*, as Mr. Thrale's.

I have been very bad of an odious sore throat, which few escape: all the little ones are well though; so is my mother, so is my master. All send their best compliments to Mr. Johnson; and Mr. Thrale particularly vexes lest you should not see Matlock on a moon-light night.

I am, &c.

I

L E T-

LETTER XXVI.

To MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM, Ashbourne, July 20, 1770.

I HOPE your complaint, however troublesome, is without danger; for your danger involves us all. When you were ill before, it was agreed that if you were lost, hope would be lost with you; for such another there was no expectation of finding.

I came hither on Wednesday, having staid one night at a lodge in the forest of Nedewood. Dr. Taylor's is a very pleasant house, with a lawn and a lake, and twenty deer and five fawns upon the lawn. Whether I shall by any light see Matlock I do not yet know.

Let us not yet have done rejoicing that Mrs. Salusbury was not in the house. The robbery will be a noble tale when we meet again.

That Baretti's book would please you all I made no doubt. I know not whether the world has ever seen such Travels before. Those whose lot it is to ramble can seldom write, and those who know how to write very seldom ramble. If Sidney had gone, as he desired, the great voyage with Drake, there would probably have been such a narrative as would have equally satisfied the poet and philosopher.

I have learned since I left you, that the names of two of the Pleiades were Coccymo and Lampado*.

I am, &c.

* The allusion is to a search made at that time by the Streatham Coterie, for female names ending in O.

LETTER XXVII.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAREST MADAM, Ashbourne, July 23, 1770.

THERE had not been so long an interval between my two last letters, but that when I came hither I did not at first understand the hours of the post.

I have seen the great bull; and very great he is. I have seen likewise his heir apparent, who promises to inherit all the bulk and all the virtues of his sire. I have seen the man who offered an hundred guineas for the young bull, while he was yet little better than a calf. Matlock, I am afraid, I shall not see, but I purpose to see Dovedale; and after all this seeing, I hope to see you.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXVIII.

TO MR. THRALE.

DEAR SIR,

March, 1771.

IN the Shrewsbury, an East India ship, commanded by Captain Jones, there is one Thomas Coxeter, who lately enlisted as a soldier in the Company's service. He repents of his adventure, and has written to his sister, who brings this letter, to procure him his discharge. He is the son of a gentleman,

gentleman, who was once my friend; and the boy was himself a favourite with my wife. I shall therefore think it a great favour, if you will be pleased to use your influence with Sir George Colebrook, that he may be discharged. The request is not great; for he is slight and feeble, and worth nothing but to those who value him for some other merit than his own.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXIX.

A Madame la Comtesse de ———.

May 16, 1771.

OUI, Madame, le moment est arrivé, et il faut que je parte, mais pourquoi faut-il partir? est-ce que je m'ennuye? je m'ennuierai ailleurs. Est-ce que je cherche ou quelque plaisir ou quelque soulagement? Je ne cherche rien, je n'espère rien. Aller, voir ce que j'ai vû, être un peu réjoui, un peu dégouté, me ressouvenir que la vie se passe & qu'elle se passe en vain, me plaindre de moi, m'endurcir aux dehors, voici le tout de ce qu'on compte pour les délices de l'année.

Que Dieu vous donne, Madame, tous les agrémens de la vie, avec un esprit qui peut en jouir, sans s'y livrer trop.

L E T T E R X X X.

To MRS. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

June 15, 1771.

IT seems strange that I should live a week so near you, and yet never see you. I have been once to enquire after you, and when I have written this note am going again. The use of the pamphlet the letter will shew, which lies at the proper page. When Mr. L—— shews so much attention, it cannot become me to shew less. What to think of the case I know not; the relation has all appearance of truth; and one great argument is, that the only danger is in not believing. The water can, I think, do no harm; Dr. Wall thinks it may do good. If Mrs. Salusbury should think fit to go before you can go with her, I will attend her, if she will accept of my company, with great readiness, at my own expence, and if I am in the country will come back.

I need not tell you, that I hope you are with the necessary exceptions all well, or that

I am, &c.

L E T.

28 LETTERS TO AND FROM

LETTER XXXI.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM, Thursday, June 20, 1771.

THIS night, at nine o'clock, Sam. Johnson and Francis Barber, Esquires, set out in the Lichfield stage; Francis is indeed rather upon it. What adventures we may meet with who can tell?

I shall write when I come to Lichfield, and hope to hear in return, that you are safe, and Mrs. Salisbury better, and all the rest as well as I left them.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXXII.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM, Lichfield, June 22, 1771.

LAST night I came safe to Lichfield; this day I was visited by Mrs. Cobb. This afternoon I went to Mrs. Aston, where I found Miss T——, and waited on her home. Miss T—— wears spectacles, and can hardly climb the stiles. I was not tired at all, either last night or to-day. Miss Porter is very kind to me. Her dog and cats are all well.

In all this there is nothing very memorable, but *sands form the mountain*. I hope to hear from Streatham of a greater event, that a new being is born that shall in time write such letters as this, and that another being is safe that she may continue to write such. She can indeed do many other things; she can add to the pleasure of many lives, and among others to that of

Her most obedient, and

Most humble servant.

L E T T E R X X X I I I .

T O M R S . T H R A L E .

DEAR MADAM,

June 25, 1771.

ALL your troubles, I hope, are now past, and the little stranger safe in the cradle. You have then nothing to do but survey the lawn from your windows, and see Lucy try to run after Harry.

Here things go wrong. They have cut down another tree, but they do not yet grow very rich. I enquired of my barber after another barber; that barber, says he, is dead, and his son has left off, to turn maltster. Maltsters, I believe, do not get much money. The price of barley and the king's duty are known, and their profit is never suffered to rise high.—But there is often a rise upon stock.—There may as well be a fall—Very seldom. There are those in this town that have not a farthing less this year than fifty pounds by the
the

the rise upon stock. Did you think there had been yet left a city in England, where the gain of fifty pounds in a year would be mentioned with emphasis?

I am, &c.



LETTER XXXIV.

To MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM, Ashbourne, July 3, 1771.

LAST Saturday I came to Ashbourne; the dangers or the pleasures of the journey I have at present no disposition to recount; else might I paint the beauties of my native plains; might I tell of “the smiles of nature, and the charms of art:” else might I relate how I crossed the Staffordshire canal, one of the great efforts of human labour, and human contrivance; which, from the bridge on which I viewed it, passed away on either side, and loses itself in distant regions, uniting waters that nature had divided, and dividing lands which nature had united. I might tell how these reflections fermented in my mind till the chaise stopped at Ashbourne, at Ashbourne in the Peak. Let not the barren name of the Peak terrify you; I have never wanted strawberries and cream. The great bull has no disease but age. I hope in time to be like the great bull; and hope you will be like him too a hundred years hence.

I am, &c.

L E T-

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 37

LETTER XXXV.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

Ashbourne, July 7, 1771.

NO news yet of *****. Our expectations were premature.

Poor Dr. Taylor is ill, and under my government; you know that the act of government is learned by obedience; I hope I can govern very tolerably.

The old rheumatism is come again into my face and mouth, but nothing yet to the lumbago; however, having so long thought it gone, I do not like its return.

Miss Porter was much pleased to be mentioned in your letter, and is sure that I have spoken better of her than she desired. She holds that both Frank and his master are much improved. The master, she says, is not half so *lounging* and *untidy* as he was, there was no such thing last year as getting him off his chair.

Be pleased to make my compliments to every body.

I am, &c.

LET-

32 LETTERS TO AND FROM.

LETTER XXXVI.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR, MADAM,

Lichfield, July 7, 1771.

ONCE more I sit down to write, and hope you will once more be willing to read it.

Last Saturday an old acquaintance found me out, not, I think, a school-fellow, but one with whom I played perhaps before I went to school. I had not seen him for forty years, but was glad to find him alive. He has had, as he phrased it, *a matter of four wives*, for which neither you nor I like him much the better; but after all his marriages he is poor, and has now, at sixty-six, two very young children.

Such, Madam, are the strange things of which we that travel come to the knowledge. We see *mores hominum multorum*. You that waste your lives over a book at home, must take life upon trust.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXXVII.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAREST MADAM,

Ashbourne, July 8, 1771.

INDIFFERENCE is indeed a strange word in a letter from me to you. Which way could it possibly creep in? I do not remember any moment,

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

ment, for a very long time past, when I could use it without contradiction from my own thoughts.

This naughty baby stays so long that I am afraid it will be a giant, like king Richard. I suppose I shall be able to tell it, "Teeth hadst thou in thy head when thou wert born." I wish your pains and your danger over.

Dr. Taylor is better, and is gone out in the chaise. My rheumatism is better too.

I would have been glad to go to Hagley, in compliance with Mr. Littelton's kind invitation, for beside the pleasure of his conversation, I should have had the opportunity of recollecting past times, and wandering *per montes notos et flumina nota*, of recalling the images of sixteen, and reviewing my conversations with poor Ford*. But this year will not bring this gratification within my power. I promised Taylor a month. Every thing is done here to please me; and his ill health is a strong reason against desertion.

I return all the compliments, and hope I may add some at last to this wicked, tiresome, dilatory bantling.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R . XXXVIII.

T O M R S . T H R A L E .

DEAREST MADAM,

Ashbourne, July 10, 1771.

I AM obliged to my friend Harry, for his remembrance; but think it a little hard that I hear nothing from Miss.

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D

There

* Cornelius Ford, his mother's nephew.

LETTERS TO AND FROM

There has been a man here to-day to take a farm. After some talk he went to see the bull, and said that he had seen a bigger. Do you think he is likely to get the farm?

Toujours strawberries and cream.

Dr. Taylor is much better, and my rheumatism is less painful. Let me hear in return as much good of you and of Mrs. Salisbury. You despise the Dog and Duck; things that are at hand are always slighted. I remember that Dr. Grevil, of Gloucester, sent for that water when his wife was in the same danger; but he lived near Malvern, and you live near the Dog and Duck. Thus, in difficult cases, we naturally trust most what we least know.

Why Bromfield, supposing that a lotion can do good, should despise laurel-water in comparison with his own receipt, I do not see; and see still less why he should laugh at that which Wall thinks efficacious. I am afraid philosophy will not warrant much hope in a lotion.

Be pleased to make my compliments from Mrs. Salisbury to Susy.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXXIX.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

Ashbourne, July 15, 1791.

WHEN we come together to practise chymistry*, I believe we shall find our furnaces sufficient for

* It was about this time that a laboratory was fitted up at Streatham, for Mr. Johnson's amusement.

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for most operations. We have a gentleman here reading philosophical lectures, who performs the chymical part with furnaces of the same kind with ours, but much less; yet he says that he can in his little furnace raise a fire that will melt iron. I saw him melt lead; and shall bring up from one for our operations. The carriage will cost more than the lead perhaps will be worth; but a chymist is very like a lover;

* And less those dangers which he cannot shun.*

I will try to get other ore, both of iron and copper, which are all which this country affords, though *feracissima metallorum regio*.

The doctor has no park, but a little enclosure behind his house, in which there are about thirty bucks and does; and they take bread from the hand. Would it not be pity to kill them? It seems to be now out of his head.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R XL.

To MRS. THRALE.

MADAM,

Albourn, July, 17, 1774.

AT Lichfield I found little to please me. One more of my few school-fellows is dead; upon which I might make a new reflection, and say, *Mors omnibus communis*. Miss Porter was rather better than last year; but I think Miss Aston grows rather worse. I took a walk in quest of

LETTERS TO AND FROM

juvenile images, but caught a cloud instead of Juno.

I longed for Taylor's chaise; but I think Lucy did not long for it, though she was not sorry to see it. Lucy is a philosopher; and considers me as one of the external and accidental things that are to be taken and left without emotion. If I could learn of Lucy would it be better? Will you teach me?

I would not have it thought that I forget Mrs. Salusbury; but nothing that I can say will be of use; and what comfort she can have, your duty will not fail to give her.

What is the matter that Queeney uses me no better? I should think she might have written to me; but she has neither sent a message nor a compliment. I thank Harry for remembering me.

Rheumatism teazes me yet.

I am, &c.

LETTER XLI.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

Ashbourne, July 20, 1771.

SWEET meat and four sauce.—With your letter which was kind, I received another from Miss * * * * *, to let me know with what *frigidity* I have answered her; and to tell me, that she neither hopes nor desires to excite greater warmth. That my first salutation *Madam* surprised her, as if an old friend, newly meeting her, had thrown a glass of cold water in her face; and that she
does

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does not design to renew our conversation when I *condescend* to visit them, after * * * * gets up.

'Tis not for nothing that we life pursue.

I have certainly now such a letter as I never had before, and such as I know not how to answer. I dare neither write with *frigidity*, nor with fire. Our intercourse is something

Which good and bad does equally confound,
And either horn of fate's dilemma wound.

There was formerly in France a *cour de l'amour*; but I fancy nobody was ever summoned before it after threescore: yet in this court, if it now subsisted, I seem likely to be nonsuited.

I am not very sorry that she is so far off. There can be no great danger in writing to her.

Of long walks I cannot tell you; for I have no companion; and the rheumatism has taken away some of my courage: but last night I slept well.

To strawberries and cream which still continue, we now add custard and bilberry pye.

Our two last fawns are well; but one of our swans is sick. Life, says Foresight, is chequer-work.

I am, &c.

L E T.

LETTERS TO AND FROM

LETTER XLII.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

July 22, 1774.

NOTHING ~~new~~ ~~has~~ happened, and yet I do not care to omit writing. Last post I had four letters, ~~all female~~. Besides yours, I had one from Mrs. Hervey, Miss * * * *, and Mrs. Williams. Mrs. Hervey must stay; and what to say to * * * * I cannot devise.

My rheumatism continues to persecute me most importunately; and how to procure ease in this place, where there are no hot rooms, I do not see; but I always hope next day, or next night, will be better, and am not always disappointed.

Queeney has not written yet; perhaps she designs that I should love Harry best.

I am, &c.

LETTER XLIII.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

Ashbourne, July 24, 1774.

WE have no news here but about health and sickness. I am miserably harassed. Dr. Taylor is quite well. The sick swan is dead; and dead without an elegy, either by himself or his friends. The other swan swims about solitary, as Mr. Thrale,

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Thrale, and I, and others should do, if we lost our mistress.

The great bull, and his four sons, are all well. We call the first of the young bulls the Dauphin; so you see, *nun defcit ullar duras*. Care is taken of the breed.

Naughty Querry! no letter yet. I hope we shall teach little Lucy better.

Be pleased to make my compliments to Mr Thrale; and desire that his builders will leave about a hundred loose bricks. I can at present think of no better place for chymistry, in fair weather, than the pump-side in the kitchen garden.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R XLIV.

TO MR. THRALE.

DEAR SIR,

July 31, 1771.

I AM this morning come to Lichfield, a place which has no temptations to prolong my stay; but if it had more, would not have such as could withhold me from your house when I am at liberty to come to it. I hope our dear mistress is got up, and recovering. Pray tell her to mind, whether I am not got quite wild for want of government.

My thoughts are now about getting to London. I shall watch for a place; for our carriages are only such as pass through the place, sometimes full, and sometimes vacant.

I am, &c.

L E T.

LETTERS TO AND FROM

LETTER XLV.

To MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM, Lichfield, Sat. Aug. 3, 1771.

IF you were well enough to write last Tuesday, you will surely be well enough to read on Monday; and therefore I will now write to you as before.

Having staid my month with Taylor, I came away on Wednesday, leaving him, I think, in a disposition of mind not very uncommon, at once weary of my stay, and grieved at my departure.

My purpose was to have made haste to you and Streatham; and who would have expected that I should be stopped by Lucy? Hearing me give Francis orders to take us places, he told me that I should not go till after next week. I thought it proper to comply; for I was pleased to find that I could please, and proud of shewing you that I do not come an universal outcast. Lucy is likewise a very peremptory maiden; and if I had gone without permission, I am not very sure that I might have been welcome at another time.

When we meet, we may compare our different uses of this interval. I shall charge you with having lingered away, in expectation and disappointment, two months, which are both physically and morally considered as analogous to the fervid and vigorous part of human life; two months, in which Nature exerts all her powers of benefaction, and graces the liberality of her hand by the elegance of her smile, two months, which, as Doodle says, "you never saw before," and which,

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which, as La Bruyere says, "you shall never see again."

But complaints are vain; we will try to do better another time.—To-morrow and to-morrow.—A few designs and a few failures, and the time of designing will be past.

Mr. Seward left Lichfield yesterday, I am afraid, not much mended by his opium. He purposes to wait on you? and if envy could do much mischief, he would have much to dread, since he will have the pleasure of seeing you sooner than, Dear Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER XLVI.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

Lichfield, Aug. 5, 1771.

THOUGH I have now been two posts without hearing from you, I hope no harm has befallen you. I have just been with the old Dean, if I may call him old who is but seventy-eight; and find him as well, both in mind and body, as his younger neighbours. I went with my Lucy this morning to a philosophical lecture; and have been this evening to see Mr. Green's curiosities, both natural and artificial; and I am come home to write to my dear lady.

So rolls the world away.

The days grow visibly shorter.—*Immortalia ne speres*

~~for a moment again.~~ I think it time to return. Do you think that after all this roving you shall be able to manage me again? I suppose, like * * * *, that you are thinking how to reduce me; but you may spare your contrivances; and need not fear that I find any reception that gives me pleasure equal to that of being, Madam.

Your, &c.

LETTER XLVII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

October 19, 1772.

I SET out on Thursday night at nine, and arrived at Lichfield on Friday night at eleven, no otherwise incommoded than with want of sleep, which however I enjoyed very comfortably the first night. I think a stage-coach is not the worst bed.

I am here at present a little wind-bound, as the paper will show you, and Lichfield is not a place of much entertainment; yet, though I have some thoughts of rambling a little, this is to be my home long enough to receive a letter, which will, I hope, tell me that you are busy in reformation, that dear Mrs. Salusbury is easy, that all the young people are well, and that Mr. Thrale brews at less expence than fourteen shillings a quarter.

They have had in this county a very prosperous hay-harvest; but malt is five-and-sixpence a strike, or two pounds four shillings a quarter. Wheat is nine-and-sixpence a bushel. These are prices which

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which are almost descriptive of a famine. Flesh is likewise very dear.

In this wide-extended calamity let us try what alleviation can be found in our kindness to each other.

I am, &c.

LETTER XLVIII.

TO MRS. THRALE.

MADAM, Lichfield, October 24, 1772.

I WOULD have you consider whether it will not be best to write to Sir T——, not taking notice of any thing proposed to Mr. B——; and only letting him know, that the report which terrified you so much has had little effect; and that you have now no particular need of his money. By this you will free him from solicitude; and, having nothing to fear from you, he will love you as before. It will abate any triumph of your enemies, and dispose them less to censure, and him less to regard censure.

When you wrote the letter which you call injudicious, I told you that it would bring no money; but I do not see how, in that tumult of distress, you could have forbore it, without appearing to be too tender of your own personal connections, and to place your uncle above your family. You did what then seemed best, and are therefore not so reasonable as I wish my mistress to be, in imputing to yourself any unpleasing consequences. Your uncle, when he knows that
you

you do not want, and mean not to disturb him, will probably subside in silence to his former stagnation of unactive kindness.

Do not suffer little things to disturb you. The brewhouse must be the scene of action, and the subject of speculation. The first consequence of our late trouble ought to be, an endeavour to brew at a cheaper rate; an endeavour not violent and transient, but steady and continual, prosecuted with total contempt of censure or wonder, and animated by resolution not to stop while more can be done. Unless this can be done, nothing can help us; and if this be done, we shall not want help.

Surely there is something to be saved; there is to be saved whatever is the difference between vigilance and neglect, between parsimony and profusion.

The price of malt has risen again. It is now two pounds eight shillings the quarter. Ale is sold in the public houses at sixpence a quart, a price which I never heard of before.

This weather, if it continues, will certainly save hay; but it can but little balance the misfortune of the scanty harvest. This, however, is an evil which we only share with the whole nation, and which we did not bring upon ourselves.

I fancy the next letter may be directed to Ashbourne. Pray write word how long I may have leave to stay.

I sincerely wish Mrs. Salisbury continuance and increase of ease and comfort; and with all good to you all.

I am, &c.

L E T.

LETTER XLIX.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

Ashbourne, Oct. 29, 1772.

IN writing to your uncle you certainly did well; but your letter was hardly confident enough. You might have ventured to speak with some degree of indifference, about money which you know that you shall not have. I have no doubt of the present perverseness of his intention; but, if I mistake not his character, his intention and execution are not very near each other; and, as he acts by mere irritation, when the disturbance is over, he will lie still.

What have I committed that I am to be left behind on Saturdays? The coach, I think, must go twice with the rest; and at one of the times you might make room for me, if you cared for me. But so am I ferved, that fit thinking and thinking of you, and all of you.

Poor dear Mrs. Salisbury! Is the place then open? I am however glad to hear, that her vigour of mind is yet undiminished. I hope she will now have less pain.

We are here as we used to be. Our bulls and cows, if there is any change, seem to grow bigger.

That you are to go to the other house I am inwardly pleased, however I may pretend to pity you; and I am of Mamma's opinion, that you may find yourself something to do there, and something of importance.

I am, &c.

LET

L E T T E R L.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

M A D A M,

October 31, 1772.

THOUGH I am just informed, that by some accidental negligence, the letter which I wrote on Thursday was not given to the post, yet I cannot refuse myself the gratification of writing again to my mistress; not that I have any thing to tell, but that by showing how much I am employed upon you, I hope to keep you from forgetting me.

Doctor Taylor asked me this morning on what I was thinking? and I was thinking on Lucy. I hope Lucy is a good girl. But she cannot yet be so good as Queeney. I have got nothing yet for Queeney's cabinet.

I hope dear Mrs. Salisbury grows no worse, I wish any thing could be found that would make her better. You must remember her admonition, and bustle in the brewhouse. When I come you may expect to have your hands full with all of us.

Our bulls and cows are all well; but we yet hate the man who had seen a bigger bull. Our deer have died; but many are left. Our water-fall at the garden makes a great roaring this wet weather.

And so no more at present from, Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T.

LETTER LI.

To Mrs. THRALL.

DEAR MADAM,

Ashbourne, Nov. 4. 1772.

WE keep writing to each other when, by the confession of both, there is nothing to be said; but, on my part, I find it very pleasing to write, and what is pleasing is very willingly continued.

I hope your prescriptions have been successful, and Mr. Thrall is well. What pity it is that we cannot do something for the dear lady! Since I came to Ashbourne I have been out of order. I was well at Lichfield. You know sickness will drive me to you; so perhaps you very heartily wish me better: but you know likewise that health will not hold me away; and I hope you think that, sick or well,

I am, &c.



LETTER LI.

To Mrs. THRALL.

DEAR MADAM,

Ashbourne, Nov 7, 1772.

SO many days and never a letter!—*Fugere fasque pietasque pudorque*. This is Turkish usage. And I have been hoping and hoping. But you are so glad to have me out of your mind:

I think you were quite right in your advice about the

the thousand pounds, for the payment could not have been delayed long; and a short delay would have lessened credit, without advancing interest. But in great matters you are hardly ever mistaken.

We have here very rainy weather; but it makes the grass grow, and makes our water-fall roar. I wish Queeney heard it; she would think it very pretty. I go down to it every day, for I have not much to do; and have not been very well; but by physick am grown better. You and all your train may be supposed to keep me company in my walks. I wish I could know how you brew, and how you go on; but you tell me nothing.

I am, &c.



LETTER LIH.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

Nov. 9, 1772.

AFTER I had sent away my last letter, I received your's, which was an answer to it; but, being not fully directed, had lain, I think, two days at the office.

I am glad that you are at last come home; and that you exert your new resolution with so much vigour. But the fury of housewifery will soon subside; and little effect will be produced but by methodical attention and even frugality; nor can these powers be immediately attained. You have your own habits; as well as those of others, to combat:

combat: you have yet the skill of management to learn, as well as the practice to establish. Do not be discouraged either by your own failures, or the perverseness of others; you will, by resolution frequently renewed, and by perseverance properly excited, overcome in time both them and yourself.

Your letter to Sir * * * * will, I doubt not, have the effect intended. When he is not pinched he will sleep.

Mr. Thrale's money, to pay for all, must come from the sale of good beer. I am far from despairing of solid and durable prosperity. Nor will your success exceed my hopes, or my opinion of your state, if, after this tremendous year, you should annually add to your fortune three thousand pounds. This will soon dismiss all incumbrances; and, when no interest is paid, you will begin annually to lay up almost five thousand. This is very splendid; but this, I think, is in your power.

Dear mamma, I hope, continues to be cheerful. Do the ———s take her house furnished? I think it a very proper habitation for them, out of the smoke of the city, and yet not in the blaze of the court.

I am much obliged to you for your desire of my return; but if I make haste, will you promise not to spoil me? I do not much trust yet to your new character, which I have had only from yourself.

Be pleased to direct your next letter to Lichfield; for I shall, I think, be contriving to find my way back.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R LIV.

TO MRS. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Nov. 19, 1772.

I LONGED for your letter to-day; for till that came I could not make any promises, or form any determinations. You need not doubt my readiness to return, but it is impossible to foresee all occasions of interruption, or all necessities of compliance.

Be pleased to tell poor dear Mrs. Salusbury, that I wish her better; and to wish is all the power that we have. In the greatest exigencies we can only regret our own inability. I think Mrs. Queeney might write again.

This year will undoubtedly be an year of struggle and difficulty; but I doubt not of getting through it; and the difficulty will grow yearly less and less. Supposing that our former mode of life kept us on the level, we shall, by the present contraction of expence, gain upon fortune a thousand a-year, even though no improvements can be made in the conduct of the trade. Every two thousand pounds saves an hundred pound interest, and therefore as we gain more we pay less. We have a rational hope of success; we have rather a moral certainty, with life and health. Let us therefore not be dejected. Continue to be a housewife, and be as frolicksome with your tongue as you please.

I am, dearest Lady, &c.

L E T.

LETTER LV.

To MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

Nov. 23, 1774.

I AM sorry that none of your letters bring better news of the poor dear lady. I hope her pain is not great. To have a disease confessedly incurable and apparently mortal is a very heavy affliction; and it is still more grievous when pain is added to despair.

Every thing else in your letter pleased me, very well, except that when I come I entreat I may not be flattered, as your letters flatter me. You have read of heroes and princes ruined by flattery; and I question if any of them had a flatterer so dangerous as you. Pray keep strictly to your character of governess.

I cannot yet get well; my nights are flatulent and unquiet, but my days are tolerably easy, and Taylor says that I look much better than when I came hither. You will see when I come, and I can take your word.

Our house affords no revolutions. The great bull is well. But I write not merely to think on you, for I do that without writing, but to keep you a little thinking on me. I perceive that I have taken a broken piece of paper, but that is not the greatest fault that you must forgive in, Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER LVI.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

Nov. 27, 1772.

IF you are so kind as to write to me on Saturday, the day on which you will receive this, I shall have it before I leave Ashbourne. I am to go to Lichfield on Wednesday, and purpose to find my way to London through Birmingham and Oxford.

I was yesterday at Chatsworth. It is a very fine house. I wish you had been with me to see it; for then, as we are apt to want matter of talk, we should have gained something new to talk on. They complimented me with playing the fountain, and opening the cascade. But I am of my friend's opinion, that when one has seen the ocean, cascades are but little things.

I am in hope of a letter to-day from you or Queeney, but the post has made some blunder, and the packet is not yet distributed. I wish it may bring me a little good of you all.

I am, &c.

LETTER LVII.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

Lichfield, Dec. 3, 1772.

I FOUND two letters here, to recompense my disappointment at Ashbourne. I shall not now be long

long before I hope to settle, for it is a fine thing to be settled. When one parts from friends it is uncertain when one shall come back, and when one comes back it is not very certain how long one shall stay. But hope, you know, was left in the box of Prometheus.

Miss Aston claims kin to you, for she says she is somehow a-kin to the Cottons. In a little time you shall make them all yet prouder of their kindred. Do not be depressed. Scarce years will not last for ever; there will sometime be good harvests. Scarcity itself produces plenty by inciting cultivation. I hope we shall soon talk these matters over very seriously, and that we shall talk of them again much less seriously many years hence.

My love to all,
Both great and small.

These verses I made myself, though perhaps they have been made by others before me.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R LVIII.

To MRS. THRALE.

M A D A M,

Tuesday, Jan. 26, 1773.

TH E inequalities of human life have always employed the meditation of deep thinkers, and I cannot forbear to reflect on the difference between your condition and my own. You live upon mock turtle,

turtle, and stewed rumps of beef; I dined yesterday upon crumpets. You sit with parish officers, caressing and caressed, the idol of the table, and the wonder of the day., I pine in the solitude of sickness, not bad enough to be pitied, and not well enough to be endured. You sleep away the night, and laugh or scold away the day. I cough and grumble, and grumble and cough. Last night was very tedious, and this day makes no promises of much ease. However I have this day put on my shoe, and hope that Gout is gone. I shall have only the cough to contend with, and I doubt whether I shall get rid of that without change of place. I caught cold in the coach as I went away, and am disordered by very little things. Is it accident or age?

I am, dearest Madam, &c,

L E T T E R L I X.

To MRS. T H R A L E.

M A D A M,

Feb. 19, 1773.

I T H I N K I am better, but cannot say much more than that I think so. I was yesterday with Miss Lucy Southwell and Mrs. Williams, at Mr. Southwell's. Miss Frances Southwell is not well.

I have an invitation to dine at Sir Joshua Reynolds's on Tuesday. May I accept it?

Do not think I am going to borrow the Roller. I have undertaken to beg from you the favour of lending to Miss Reynolds Newton on the Prophecies,

cies, and to Miss Williams Burney's Musical Journey. They are, I believe, both at Streatham.

Be pleased to make my most respectful compliments to dear Mrs. Salusbury. I wish I could send her any thing better.

Diversas hominum sortes. Here am I, sitting by myself, uncertain whether I shall dine on veal or mutton; and there are you with the top dish and the bottom dish, all upon a card, and on the other side of the card Tom Lisgow*. Of the rest that dwell in darker fame why should I make mention. Tom Lisgow is an assembly. But Tom Lisgow cannot people the world. Mr. K—— must have a place. The lion has his jackall. They will soon meet.

And when they talk, ye gods! how they will talk.

Pray let your voice and my master's help to fill the pauses.

I am, &c.

* Tom Lisgow was a voter at the Southwark election. Mr. K—— was another. When they were entertained at Mr. Thrale's table, the Editor of these letters used to write the bill of fare on one side of a large blank card in a small character, the names of the company on the other side, and refer to it from time to time as it lay by her plate, that no mistakes might be made, or offence given from ignorance or forgetfulness; to this practice Mr. Johnson laughingly alludes.

LET

LETTER LX.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAREST MADAM,

Johnson's Court, Fleet-Street,
March 9, 1773.

DR. JAMES called on me last night, deep, I think, in wine. Our dialogue was this :

—You find the case hopeless?—Quite hopeless.
—But I hope you can procure her an easier dismissal out of life?—That, I believe, is in our power.

The rest of his talk was about other things.

If it can give the dear lady any comfort, be pleased to let her know that my grief for her is very serious and very deep. If I could be useful as you can be, I would devote myself to her as you must do. But all human help is little ; her trust must be in a better Friend.

You will not let me burst in ignorance of your transaction with A——. Surely my heart is with you in your whole system of life.

I am, dearest Madam, &c.

I had written this letter before yours came,
God bless you all.

LET-

L E T T E R LXI.

To MRS. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

March 11, 1773.

YOUR negotiation will probably end as you desire. I wish your pious offices might have the same success, but death is necessary, and your tenderness will make it less painful. I am sorry that I can do nothing. The dear lady has my wishes, and sometimes my prayers. I hope our prayers will be heard for her, and her prayers for herself.

I am, &c.



L E T T E R LXII.

To MRS. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

March 17, 1773.

TO tell you that I am sorry both for the poor lady and for you is useless. I cannot help either of you. The weakness of mind is perhaps only a casual interruption or intermission of the attention, such as we all suffer when some weighty care or urgent calamity has possession of the mind. She will compose herself. She is unwilling to die, and the first conviction of approaching death raised great perturbation. I think she has but very lately thought death close at hand. She will compose herself to do that as well as she can, which

which must at last be done. May she not want the Divine assistance.

You, Madam, will have a great loss; a greater than is common in the loss of a parent. Fill your mind with hope of her happiness, and turn your thoughts first to Him who gives and takes away, in whose presence the living and dead are standing together. Then remember, that when this mournful duty is paid, others yet remain of equal obligation, and, we may hope, of less painful performance. Grief is a species of idleness, and the necessity of attention to the present preserves us, by the merciful disposition of Providence, from being lacerated and devoured by sorrow for the past. You must think on your husband and your children, and do what this dear lady has done for you.

Not to come to town while the great struggle continues is undoubtedly well resolved. But do not harass yourself into danger; you owe the care of your health to all that love you, at least to all whom it is your duty to love. You cannot give such a mother too much, if you do not give her what belongs to another.

I am, &c.



LETTER LXIII.

TO MRS. THRALE.

MADAM,

March 20, 1773. The Equinox.

I HAVE now heard twice to-day how the dear lady mends; twice is not often enough for such news. May she long and long continue mending.

ing. When I see her again, how I shall love her. If we could keep a while longer together, we should all, I hope, try to be thankful. Part we must at last; but the last parting is very afflictive. When I see her I shall torment her with caressing her. Has she yet been down stairs?

On Tuesday morning I hope to see you. I have not much to tell you, but will gather what little I can.

I shall be glad to see you, for you are much in my head, notwithstanding your negotiations for my master, he has mended his share for one year, you must think of cutting in pieces and boiling him. We will at least keep him out of J—ck—n's* copper. You will be at leisure now to think of brewing and negotiating, and a little of, Madam,

Your, &c.



L E T T E R LXIV.

To MRS. THRALE.

MADAM,

March 25, 1773.

IF my letters can do you any good it is not fit that you should want them. You are always flattering me with the good that I do, without knowing it.

The

* H—ph—y J—ck—n was a pretender to chymistry, who obtaining much of Mr. T.'s confidence, used it to his own emolument only, not his friend's, who suffered exceedingly from the experiments made by him at the brewhouse, in consequence of a notion that he had some secret to preserve wood from decay, and brew at a smaller expence than was possible with malt or hops.

The return of Mrs. Salisbury's appetite will undoubtedly prolong her life; I therefore wish it to continue or to improve. You did not say whether she went down stairs.

Harry will be happier now he goes to school and reads Milton. Miss will want him for all her vapouring.

Did not I tell you that I thought I had written to Boswell? he has answered my letter.

I am going this evening to put young Otway to school with Mr. Elphinston.

C—— is so distressed with abuse about his play, that he has solicited Goldsmith to *take him off the rack of the newspapers*.

M—— is preparing a whole pamphlet against G——, and G—— is, I suppose, collecting materials to confute M——.

Jennens has published Hamlet, but without a preface, and S—— declares his intention of letting him pass the rest of his life in peace. Here is news.

I am, &c.



LETTER LXV.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

April 27, 1773.

HOPE is more pleasing than fear, but not less fallacious; you know, when you do not try to deceive yourself, that the disease which at last is to destroy, must be gradually growing worse, and that it is vain to wish for more than that the
descent

descent to death may be slow and easy. In this wish I join with you, and hope it will be granted. Dear, dear lady, whenever she is lost she will be missed, and whenever she is remembered she will be lamented. Is it a good or an evil to me that she now loves me? It is surely a good; for you will love me better, and we shall have a new principle of concord; and I shall be happier with honest sorrow, than with sullen indifference; and far happier still than with counterfeited sympathy.

I am reasoning upon a principle very far from certain, a confidence of surivance. You, or I, or both, may be called into the presence of the Supreme Judge before her. I have lived a life of which I do not like the review. Surely I shall in time live better.

I sat down with an intention to write high compliments, but my thoughts have taken another course, and some other time must now serve to tell you with what other emotions, benevolence, and fidelity,

I am, &c.



LETTER LXVI.

TO MRS. THRALE.

MADAM,

May 17, 1773.

NEVER imagine that your letters are long; they are always too short for my curiosity. I do not know that I was ever content with a single perusal.

Of dear Mrs. Salisbury I never expect much better news than you send me; *de pis en pis* is the natural

natural and certain course of her dreadful malady. I am content when it leaves her ease enough for the exercise of her mind.

Why should Mr. * * * * * suppose, that what I took the liberty of suggesting was concerted with you? He does not know how much I revolve his affairs, and how honestly I desire his prosperity. I hope he has let the hint take some hold of his mind.

Your declaration to Miss * * * * * is more general than my opinions allow. I think an unlimited promise of acting by the opinion of another so wrong, that nothing, or hardly any thing, can make it right. All unnecessary vows are folly, because they suppose a prescience of the future which has not been given us. They are, I think, a crime, because they resign that life to chance which God has given us to be regulated by reason; and superinduce a kind of fatality, from which it is the great privilege of our nature to be free. Unlimited obedience is due only to the Universal Father of Heaven and Earth. My parents may be mad or foolish; may be wicked and malicious; may be erroneously religious, or absurdly scrupulous. I am not bound to compliance with mandates either positive or negative, which either religion condemns, or reason rejects. There wanders about the world a wild notion, which extends over marriage more than over any other transaction. If Miss * * * * * followed a trade, would it be said that she was bound in conscience to give or refuse credit at her father's choice? And is not marriage a thing in which she is more interested, and has therefore more right of choice? When I may suffer for my own crimes, when I may be sued for my own debts, I may judge by parity of reason for my own happiness. The parent's moral right can arise only from
from

from his kindness, and his civil right only from his memory.

Conscience cannot dictate obedience to the wicked, or compliance with the foolish; and of interest mere prudence is the judge.

If the daughter is bound without a promise, she promises nothing; and if she is not bound, she promises too much.

What is meant by tying up money in trade I do not understand. No money is so little tied as that which is employed in trade. Mr. * * * * * perhaps only means, that in consideration of money to be advanced, he will oblige his son to be a trader. This is reasonable enough. Upon ten thousand pounds diligently occupied, they may live in great plenty and splendour, without the mischiefs of idleness.

I can write a long letter as well as my mistress; and shall be glad that my long letters may be as welcome as her's.

My nights are grown again very uneasy and troublesome. I know not that the country will mend them; but I hope your company will mend my days. Though I cannot now expect much attention, and would not wish for more than can be spared from the poor dear lady, yet I shall see you and hear you every now and then; and to see and hear you, is always to hear wit, and to see virtue.

I shall, I hope, see you to-morrow, and a little on the two next days; and with that little I must for the present try to be contented.

I am, &c.

L E T.

L E T T E R LXVII.

MRS. THRALE to DR. JOHNSON.

S I R,

SO many things happening all at once oppress me, and I cannot judge rightly of any ;—'tis therefore I beg counsel from you.

This dear sweet lady is willing I should come to town ; and I *will* come, and try the *gutta cavat lapidem* upon A———'s heart, I believe talking in high terms would be better ; but how can I when my hopes are low ? Meantime * * * * persecutes me for advice, as if I had nobody to think on but her ; and you say, I am wrong there again ; yet I cannot repent what I said about parental authority, and am only amazed at your little veneration for it.—All appears to me as if it would end *your* way, in this particular case ; yet 'tis strange that a man of your notions should think that way uniformly right. When I have heard you treat regal claims to power as things too high and too sacred even for dispute, how could I expect to read under your hand such sentiments as I now receive concerning an authority elder than the regal one, if not equally venerable ?—for men were fathers certainly before they were kings. Might I be more serious, I could remind those who despise upon principle a title which God himself disdains not to accept,—that the eighth part of the Postdiluvian world was cursed for a mere breach of filial reverence, not disobedience of command,—but a merry or malicious desire only of propagating the disgrace of a parent.

All this, however, will serve for us to dispute about at night, when I sit up in the next room to
my

my poor suffering mother, whose mistaken tenderness drives me from her bedside at twelve o'clock; and my master will keep us from scolding *loud*; for 'tis astonishing how quick she hears every thing,—ay, and sees quicker too; for she knew Mr. Hale as he rode by yesterday, and said, What a lean horse he had!

This is a dismal house, and that A———'s callous cruelty makes the other no relief to me; but Mr. Thrale will come home now. I am really hurried, like the fallen spirits in Milton, from frost to fire, and from fire to frost; nor can get down a drop of the oblivious water on the road, though you will find the wash-way, as we call it, sadly out since these sudden rains. This letter goes by the early morning cart. Don't tell my master that I write low-spirited; the cold bath will refresh me before he comes.—You must depend on *his* coach for carriage home, not *mine*. Do not believe that I shall neglect my husband's affairs out of fondness for my mother. Indeed you cannot think how poorly my negotiation with that hard-hearted fellow has hitherto succeeded.

Farewell, my dear Sir, and do all you can for us; and settle with Mr. Thrale about these lovers, for it would be really a choice thing to see *somebody* happy.—Yet I hope I do not precipitate their affairs for the sake of taking a little additional weight off the already oppressed mind of

Your, &c.

LETTER LXVIII.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR LADY,

May 22, 1773.

DR. Lawrence is of your mind about the intermission, and thought the bark would be best; but I have had so good a night as makes me wonder. Dr. Lawrence is just gone. He says I have no fever, and may let bark alone, if I will venture, but it is *meo periculo*.

Make my compliments to the dear lady.

I think Mr. T—— has done right in not prohibiting at least F——'s flight with her lover. There is no danger of Mr. R——'s taking care of his son, and of his son's wife; and as he is willing to receive a daughter-in-law without a fortune, he has a right to provide for her his own way. The great motive to his consent is, that his son will engage in trade; and therefore no doubt can be made but he will enable him to do it; and whether at Midsummer, or Michaelmas, we have no need to care, nor right to prescribe.

I am, &c.

L E T-

L E T T E R LXIX.

To MRS. T H R A L E.

DEAREST LADY,

May 23, 1773.

STILL flatter, flatter! Why should the poor be flattered? The doctor was with me again to-day, and we both think the fever quite gone. I believe it was not an intermittent, for I took of my own head physic yesterday; and Celsus says, it seems that if a cathartick be taken the fit will return *certo certius*. I would bear something rather than Celsus should be detected in an error. But I say it was a *febris continua*, and had a regular crisis.

What poor * * * * said, is worthy of the greatest mind, since the greatest mind can get no further. In the highest and the lowest things we all are equal.

As to Mr. * * * *, let him see a couple of fellows within call; and if he makes a savage noise, order them to come gradually nearer, and you will see how quiet he will grow.

Let the poor dear lady know that I am sorry for her sorrows, and sincerely and earnestly wish her all good.

Write to me when you can, but do not flatter me. I am sorry you can think it pleases me. It is enough for me to be, as Mr. * * * * phrases it,

M A D A M,

Your friend and servant,

SAM. JOHNSON.

L E T T E R LXX.

MRS. THRALE, to DR. JOHNSON,

May 23, 1773.

I WRITE again, Dear Sir, though the time of meeting is so near, and should be sorry to think my flattery did *not* please you—if flattery it is—but I call it honest praise. Other people make more bustle about your merits every day, and you bear them patiently enough; pray let my incense-pot have a place among the rest. Mr. Thrale swears he found you one morning last week in the midst of a heap of men, who, he says, carried each a brass-headed cane in his hand, and that they were all flattering away *a qui mieux mieux*. Surely there was not in the whole company one to be found who uttered expressions of esteem with more sincerity than myself; none of them think you as much exalted over the common herd of mortals as I think you; and none of them can praise you from a purer motive. It is my consolation to have a wise friend, my delight to declare that I know him such; nor is this a time when I can afford to lose either delight or consolation. Should a man protest indeed, that a fever-fit would be more welcome to him than the detecting me in an error, I might reasonably enough begin to be alarmed, and fear that he was flattering me grossly—but I never did vent my partiality in any terms half as violent as those; and yet dear Mr. Johnson, who gravely says *that* of old Celsus, has the courage to reprove me for flattering.

Well! I was told this morning, that G——
O—— speaks very highly of our master up and
down;

down; as I believe he hates us all, *he* cannot be accused of playing the sycophant: the extorted praise of an enemy however, though in many respects grateful enough, has somewhat offensive in it too, like the coarse perfume obtained by chymical operations on a poisonous substance, while the natural emanation of a friend's good will, resembles the reviving scent of vegetable fragrance. I am glad at all events, that he is forced to speak respectfully, and even my poor mother enjoys the thought.

What a loss am I about to endure in her death! Let me hope that your kindness may prompt you to soothe the pain, and as far as it is possible to fill up the chasm; though you shall permit me to add my firm persuasion that all endeavours will be insufficient. If the Emperor of China should take from one of his slaves the liberty of ever more tasting water, rice, or tea, he would be very ill compensated, poor soul! by the free use of every dainty his master's magnificent table could afford him. No companion however wise, no friend however useful, can be to me what my mother has been: her image will long pursue my fancy; her voice for ever hang in my ears: may her precepts but sink into my heart! When fortune is taken away, chance or diligence may repair it; fame likewise has been found not wholly irrecoverable. —My loss alone can neither be restored nor supplied in this world; I will try to turn my best thoughts upon another. Meanwhile, a million of things press upon me *hers*, and force me to defend a post scarcely tenable; give me your company, your counsel, and your prayers, for I am ever,

Your truly faithful servant.

L E T.

70 LETTERS TO AND FROM

LETTER LXXI.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

May 24, 1773.

MY fever has departed; but has left a very severe inflammation in the seeing eye. I take physick; and do not eat.

Recommend me to the poor dear lady, whom I hope to see again, however melancholy must be the interview. She has now quickly to do what I cannot reasonably hope to put off long,

Res siqua diu mortalibus ulla est;

and which is at no great distance from the youngest. I have the same hope with poor N——.

You do not tell me whither the young lovers are gone. I am glad * * * * is gone with them. What a life do they image in futurity! how unlike to what they are to find it! But to-morrow is an old deceiver, and his cheat never grows stale. I suppose they go to Scotland. Was * * * * dressed *à la Népotienne*?

I shall not, I think, go into the country till you are so kind as to fetch me, unless some stronger invitation should be offered than I have yet found.

The difference between praise and flattery is the same as between that hospitality that sets wine enough before the guest, and that which forces him to be drunk. If you love me, and surely I hope you do, why should you vitiate my mind with a false opinion of its own merit? why should you teach it to be unsatisfied with the civility of every other place? You know how much I honour

Dr. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 71

now you, and you are bound to use your influence well.

Do not let your own dear spirits forsake you. Your task at present is heavy, and yet you purpore to take me; but I hope I shall take from it one way what I add another. I purpore to watch the *molta tempora fandi*, and to talk, as occasions offer, to ***

I am, &c.

L E T T E R LXXII.

Mrs. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

I ENCLOSE my letter to our new married man.—Bring it me home at night*, and say you like it at least as well as Swift's; which you do *not* like, to the lady.

Adieu.

(C O P Y .)

Mrs. THRALE to Mr. ———, inclosed in the foregoing Letter to Dr. JOHNSON.

MY DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED the news of your marriage with infinite delight, and hope that the sincerity with which

* He did bring it the same evening, and honoured it with his approbation.

which I wish your happiness; may excuse the liberty I take in giving a few rules whereby more certainly to obtain it. I see you smile at my wrong-headed kindness, and reflecting on the charms of your bride, cry out in a rapture, that you are happy enough without my rules. I know you are; but after one of the forty years, which I hope you will pass pleasingly together, is over, this letter may come in turn, and rules for felicity may not be found unnecessary, however some of them may appear impracticable.

Could that kind of love be kept alive through the marriage state, which makes the charm of a single one, the sovereign good would no longer be sought for; in the union of two faithful lovers it would be found: but reason shews us that this is impossible, and experience informs us that it never was so; we must preserve it as long, and supply it as happily as we can.

When your present violence of passion subsides however, and a more cool and tranquil affection takes its place, be not hasty to censure yourself as indifferent, or to lament yourself as unhappy; you have lost that only which it was impossible to retain, and it were graceless amid the pleasures of a prosperous summer to regret the blossoms of a transient spring. Neither unwarily condemn your bride's insipidity, till you have recollected that no object however sublime, no sounds however charming, can continue to transport us with delight when they no longer strike us with novelty. The skill to renovate the powers of pleasing is said indeed to be possessed by some women in an eminent degree, but the artifices of maturity are seldom seen to adorn the innocence of youth; you have made your choice, and ought to approve it.

Satiety follows quick upon the heels of possession;

tion; and to be happy, we must always have something in view. The person of your lady is already all your own, and will not grow more pleasing in your eyes I doubt, though the rest of your sex will think her handsomer for these dozen years. Turn therefore all your attention to her mind, which will grow brighter by polishing. Study some easy science together, and acquire a familiarity of tastes while you enjoy a community of pleasures. You will, by this means, have many images in common, and be freed from the necessity of separating to find amusement; nothing is so dangerous to wedded love as the possibility of either being happy out of the company of the other; endeavour therefore to cement the present intimacy on every side; let your wife never be kept ignorant of your income, your expences, your friendships, or aversions; let her know your very faults; but make them amiable by your virtues; consider all concealment as a breach of fidelity; let her never have any thing to *find out* in your character, and remember, that from the moment one of the partners turns spy upon the other, they have commenced a state of hostility.

Seek not for happiness in singularity; and dread a refinement of wisdom as a deviation into folly. Listen not to those sages who advise you always to scorn the counsel of a woman; and if you comply with her requests pronounce you to be wife-ridden. Think not any privation, except of positive evil, an excellence, and do not congratulate yourself that your wife is not a learned lady, that she never touches a card, or is wholly ignorant how to make a pudding. Cards, Cookery, and learning, are all good in their places, and may all be used with advantage.

With regard to expence, I can only observe that

that the money laid out in the purchase of distinction is seldom or ever profitably employed. We live in an age when splendid furniture and glittering equipage are grown too common to catch the notice of the meanest spectator, and for the greater ones they only regard our wasteful folly with silent contempt, or open indignation. — This may perhaps be a displeasing reflection, but the following consideration ought to make amends. The age we live in, says, I think, peculiar attention to the higher distinctions of wit, knowledge, and virtue, to which we may more safely, more cheaply, and more honourably aspire. The giddy flirt of quality frets at the respect she sees paid to Lady Edgecombe, and the gay dunce sits pining for a partner, while Jones the orientalist leads up the ball.

I said that the person of your lady would not grow more pleasing to you, but pray let her never suspect that it grows less so; that a woman will pardon an affront to her understanding much sooner than one to her person is well known; nor will any of us contradict the assertion. All our attainments, all our arts, are employed to gain and keep the heart of man; and what mortification can exceed the disappointment, if the end be not obtained? There is no reproof however pointed, no punishment however severe, that a woman of spirit will not prefer to neglect; and if she can endure it without complaint, it only proves that she means to make herself amends by the attention of others for the slights of her husband. For this, and for every reason, it behoves a married man not to let his politeness fail, though his ardour may abate, but to retain, at least, that general civility towards his *own* lady which he is so willing to pay to every other, and not shew a wife of eighteen or twenty years old, that every man

man in company can treat her with more complaisance than he who so often vowed to her eternal fondness.

It is not my opinion that a young woman should be indulged in every wild wish of her gay heart or giddy head, but contradiction may be softened by domestic kindness, and quiet pleasures substituted in the place of noisy ones. Public amusements are not indeed so expensive as is sometimes imagined, but they tend to alienate the minds of married people from each other. A well chosen society of friends and acquaintance, more eminent for virtue and good sense than for gaiety and splendour, where the conversation of the day may afford comment for the evening, seems the most rational pleasure this great town can afford; and to this, a game at cards now and then gives an additional relish.

That your own superiority should always be seen, but never felt; seems an excellent general rule. A wife should outshine her husband in nothing, not even in her dress. If she happens to have a taste for the trifling distinction that finery can confer, suffer her not for a moment to fancy, when she appears in public, that Sir Edward or the Colonel are finer gentlemen than her husband. The bane of married happiness among the *city* men in general has been, that finding themselves unfit for polite life, they transferred their vanity to their ladies, dressed them up gaily, and sent them out a gallanting, while the good man was to regale with port wine or rum punch, perhaps among mean companions, after the counting-house was shut; this practice produced the ridicule thrown on them in all our comedies and novels since commerce began to prosper. But now that I am so near the subject, a word or two on jealousy may not be amiss, for though
not

not a failing of the present age's growth, yet the seeds of it are too certainly sown in every warm bosom for us to neglect it as a fault of no consequence. If you are ever tempted to be jealous, *watch* your wife narrowly—but never *teize* her; tell her your *jealousy*, but conceal your *suspicion*; let her, in short, be satisfied that it is only your odd temper, and even troublesome attachment, that makes you follow her; and let her not dream that you ever doubted seriously of her virtue even for a moment. If she is disposed towards jealousy of *you*, let me beseech you to be always explicit with her and never mysterious: be above delighting in her pain of all things,—nor do your business, nor pay your visits with an air of concealment, when all you are doing might as well be proclaimed perhaps in the parish vestry. But I will hope better than this of your tenderness and of your virtue, and will release you from a lecture you have so very little need of, unless your extreme youth and my uncommon regard will excuse it. And now farewell; make my kindest compliments to your wife, and be happy in proportion as happiness is wished you by,

Dear Sir, &c.



LETTER LXXIII.

To MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

August 12, 1773.

WE left London on Friday the sixth, not very early, and travelled without any memorable accident

dent through a country which I had seen before. In the evening I was not well, and was forced to stop at Stilton, one stage short of Stamford, where we intended to have lodged.

On the 7th, we passed through Stamford and Grantham, and dined at Newark, where I had only time to observe that the market-place was uncommonly spacious and neat. In London we should call it a square, though the sides were neither straight nor parallel. We came, at night, to Doncaster, and went to church in the morning, where Chambers found the monument of Robert of Doncaster, who says on his stone something like this :—What I gave, that I have ; what I spent, that I had ; what I left, that I lost.—So saith Robert of Doncaster, who reigned in the world fifty-seven years, and all that time lived not one. Here we were invited to dinner, and therefore made no great haste away.

We reached York however that night ; I was much disordered with old complaints. Next morning we saw the Minster, an edifice of loftiness and elegance equal to the highest hopes of architecture. I remember nothing but the dome of St. Paul's that can be compared with the middle walk. The Chapter-house is a circular building, very stately, but I think excelled by the Chapter-house of Lincoln.

I then went to see the ruins of the Abbey, which are almost vanished, and I remember nothing of them distinct.

The next visit was to the jail, which they call the Castle ; a fabrick built lately, such is terrestrial mutability, out of the materials of the ruined Abbey. The under jailor was very officious to shew his fetters, in which there was no contrivance. The head jailor came in, and seeing me look I suppose fatigued, offered me wine, and when
I went

I went away would not suffer his servant to take money. The jail is accounted the best in the kingdom, and you find the jailor deserving of his dignity.

We dined at York, and went on to North-allerton, a place of which I know nothing, but that it afforded us a lodging on Monday night, and about two hundred and seventy years ago gave birth to Roger Ascham.

Next morning we changed our horses at Darlington, where Mr. Cornelius Harrison, a cousin-german of mine, was perpetual curate. He was the only one of my relations who ever rose in fortune above penury, or in character above neglect.

The church is built crosswise, with a fine spire, and might invite a traveller to survey it, but I perhaps wanted vigour, and thought I wanted time.

The next stage brought us to Durham, a place of which Mr. Thrale bid me take particular notice. The Bishop's palace has the appearance of an old feudal castle, built upon an eminence, and looking down upon the river, upon which was formerly thrown a draw-bridge, as I suppose to be raised at night, lest the Scots should pass it.

The cathedral has a massy and solidity such as I have seen in no other place; it rather awes than pleases, as it strikes with a kind of gigantick dignity, and aspires to no other praise than that of rocky solidity and indeterminate duration. I had none of my friends resident, and therefore saw but little. The library is mean and scanty.

At Durham, besides all expectations, I met an old friend: Miss Fordyce is married there to a physician. We met, I think, with honest kindness on both sides. I thought her much decayed, and having since heard that the banker had involved her husband in his extensive ruin, I cannot forbear

bear to think that I saw in her withered features more impression of sorrow than of time.

Quà terra patet, fera regnat Erinny.

He that wanders about the world sees new forms of human misery, and if he chances to meet an old friend, meets a face darkened with troubles.

On Tuesday night we came hither; yesterday I took some care of myself, and to-day I am *quite polite*. I have been taking a view of all that could be shewn me, and find that all very near to nothing. You have often heard me complain of finding myself disappointed by books of travels; I am afraid travel itself will end likewise in disappointment. One town, one country, is very like another: civilized nations have the same customs, and barbarous nations have the same nature: there are indeed minute discriminations both of places and of manners, which perhaps are not wanting of curiosity, but which a traveller seldom stays long enough to investigate and compare. The dull utterly neglect them, the acute see a little, and supply the rest with fancy and conjecture.

I shall set out again to-morrow, but I shall not, I am afraid, see Alnwick, for Dr. Percy is not there. I hope to lodge to-morrow night at Berwick, and the next at Edinburgh, where I shall direct Mr. Drummond, bookseller at Ossian's head, to take care of my letters.

I hope the little dears are all well, and that my dear master and mistress may go some-whither, but wherever you go do not forget,

M A D A M,

Your most humble servant.

I am pretty well.

Thus

August 15.

Thus far I had written at Newcastle. I forgot to send it. I am now at Edinburgh; and have been this day running about. I run pretty well.



L E T T E R LXXIV.

To MRS. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Edinburgh, August 17, 1773.

ON the 13th, I left Newcastle, and in the afternoon came to Alnwick, where we were treated with great civility by the Duke: I went through the apartments, walked on the wall, and climbed the towers. That night we lay at Belford, and on the next night came to Edinburgh. On Sunday (15th) I went to the English chapel. After dinner, Dr. Robertson came in, and promised to shew me the place. On Monday I saw their public buildings: the cathedral, which I told Robertson I wished to see because it had once been a church, the courts of justice, the parliament-house, the advocate's library, the repository of records, the college and its library, and the palace, particularly the old tower where the king of Scotland seized David Rizzio in the queen's presence. Most of their buildings are very mean; and the whole town bears some resemblance to the old part of Birmingham.

Boswell has very handsome and spacious rooms; level with the ground on one side of the house, and on the other four stories high.

... At

At dinner on Monday were the Dutcheſs of Douglas, an old lady, who talks broad Scotch with a paralytick voice, and is ſcarce underſtood by her own countrymen; the Lord Chief Baron, Sir Adolphus Oughton, and many more. At ſupper there was ſuch a conflux of company that I could ſcarcely ſupport the tumult. I have never been well in the whole journey, and am very eaſily diſordered.

This morning I ſaw at breakfaſt Dr. Blacklock, the blind poet, who does not remember to have ſeen light, and is read to, by a poor ſcholar, in Latin, Greek, and French. He was originally a poor ſcholar himſelf. I looked on him with reverence. To-morrow our journey begins; I know not when I ſhall write again. I am but poorly.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R LXXV.

To MRS. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Bamff, Auguſt 25, 1773.

IT has ſo happened that though I am perpetually thinking on you, I could ſeldom find opportunity to write; I have in fourteen days ſent only one letter; you muſt conſider the fatigues of travel, and the difficulties encountered in a ſtrange country.

Auguſt 18th, I paſſed, with Boſwell, the Frith of Forth, and began our journey; in the paſſage we obſerved an iſland, which I perſuaded my

companions to survey. We found it a rock somewhat troublesome to climb, about a mile long, and half a mile broad; in the middle were the ruins of an old fort, which had on one of the stones.—Maria Re. 1564. It had been only a blockhouse one story high. I measured two apartments, of which the walls were entire, and found them twenty-seven feet long, and twenty-three broad. The rock had some grass and many thistles, both cows and sheep were grazing. There was a spring of water. The name is Inchkeith. Look on your maps. This visit took about an hour. We pleased ourselves with being in a country all our own, and then went back to the boat, and landed at Kinghorn, a mean town, and travelling through Kirkaldie, a very long town nearly built, and Cowpar, which I could not see because it was night, we came late to St. Andrew's, the most ancient of the Scotch universities, and once the see of the Primate of Scotland. The inn was full, but lodgings were provided for us at the house of the professor of rhetoric, a man of elegant manners, who showed us, in the morning, the poor remains of a stately cathedral, demolished in Knox's reformation, and now only to be imagined by tracing its foundation, and contemplating the little ruins that are left. Here was once a religious house. Two of the vaults or cellars of the subprior are even yet entire. In one of them lives an old woman, who claims an hereditary residence in it, boasting that her husband was the sixth tenant of this gloomy mansion, in a lineal descent, and claims by her marriage with this lord of the cavern an alliance with the Bruces. Mr. Boswell staid a while to interrogate her, because he understood her language; she told him, that she and her cat lived together, that she had two sons gone where, who might perhaps be dead; that

that when there were quality in the town notice was taken of her, and that now she was neglected, but did not trouble them. Her habitation contained all that she had; her turf for fire was laid in one place, and her balls of coal dust in another, but her bed seemed to be clean. Boswell asked her if she never heard any noises, but she could tell him of nothing supernatural, though she often wandered in the night among the graves and ruins, only she had sometimes notice by dreams of the death of her relations. We then viewed the remains of a castle on the margin of the sea, in which the archbishops resided, and in which Cardinal Beaton was killed.

The professors who happened to be resident in the vacation made a publick dinner, and treated us very kindly and respectfully. They shewed us their colleges, in one of which there is a library that for luminousness and elegance may vie at least with the new edifice at Streatham. But learning seems not to prosper among them; one of their colleges has been lately alienated, and one of their churches lately deserted. An experiment was made of planting a shrubbery in the church, but it did not thrive.

Why the place should thus fall to decay I know not; for education, such as is here to be had, is sufficiently cheap. Their term, or, as they call it, their session, lasts seven months in the year, which the students of the highest rank and greatest expence may pass here for twenty pounds, in which are included board, lodging, books, and the continual instruction of three professors.

20th, We left St. Andrew's, well satisfied with our reception, and, crossing the Frith of Tay, came to Dundee, a dirty, despicable town. We passed afterwards through Aberbrothick, famous once for an abbey, of which there are only a few

fragments left, but those fragments testify that the fabrick was once of great extent, and of stupendous magnificence. Two of the towers are yet standing, though shattered; into one of them Boswell climbed, but found the stairs broken: the way into the other we did not see, and had not time to search; I believe it might be ascended, but the top, I think, is open.

We lay at Montrose, a neat place, with a spacious area for the market, and an elegant town-house.

21st, We travelled towards Aberdeen, another university; and in the way dined at Lord Monboddo's, the Scotch judge, who has lately written a strange book about the origin of language, in which he traces monkeys up to men, and says that in some countries the human species have tails like other beasts. He enquired for these long-tailed men of Banks, and was not well pleased that they had not been found in all his peregrination. He talked nothing of this to me, and I hope we parted friends; for we agreed pretty well, only we disputed in adjusting the claims of merit between a shopkeeper of London, and a savage of the American wildernesses. Our opinions were, I think, maintained on both sides without full conviction; Monboddo declared boldly for the savage, and I, perhaps for that reason, sided with the citizen.

We came late to Aberdeen, where I found my dear mistress's letter, and learned that all our little people were happily recovered of the measles. Every part of your letter was pleasing.

There are two cities of the name of Aberdeen: the old town, built about a mile inland, once the see of a bishop, which contains the King's College, and the remains of the cathedral, and the new town, which stands, for the sake of trade, upon a frith

frith or arm of the sea, so that ships rest against the key.

The two cities have their separate magistrates, and the two colleges are in effect two universities, which confer degrees independently on each other.

New Aberdeen is a large town, built almost wholly of that granite which is used for the new pavement in London, which, hard as it is, they square with very little difficulty. Here I first saw the women in plaids. The plaid makes at once a hood and cloak, without cutting or sewing, merely by the manner of drawing the opposite sides over the shoulders. The maids at the inns run over the house barefoot, and children, not dressed in rags, go without shoes or stockings. Shoes are indeed not yet in universal use, they came late into this country. One of the professors told us, as we were mentioning a fort built by Cromwell, that the country owed much of its present industry to Cromwell's soldiers. They taught us, said he, to raise cabbage and make shoes. How they lived without shoes may yet be seen; but in the passage through villages, it seems to him that surveys their gardens, that when they had not cabbage they had nothing.

Education is here of the same price as at St. Andrews, only the session is but from the 1st of November to the 1st of April. The academical buildings seem rather to advance than decline. They shewed their libraries, which were not very splendid, but some manuscripts were so exquisitely penned that I wished my dear mistress to have seen them. I had an unexpected pleasure, by finding an old acquaintance now professor of physick in the King's College: we were on both sides glad of the interview, having not seen nor perhaps thought on one another for many years; but we had no emulation,

emulation, nor had either of us risen to the other's envy, and our old kindness was easily renewed, I hope we shall never try the effect of so long an absence, and that I shall always be, Madam,

Your, &c.

—————
 L E T T E R LXXVI.

To MRS. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Inverness, Aug. 28, 1773.

AUGUST 23d, I had the honour of attending the Lord Provost of Aberdeen, and was presented with the freedom of the city, not in a gold box, but in good Latin. Let me pay Scotland one just praise! there was no officer gaping for a fee; this could have been said of no city on the English side of the Tweed. I wore my patent of freedom *pro more* in my hat, from the new town to the old, about a mile. I then dined with my friend the professor of physick at his house, and saw the King's College. Boswell was very angry that the Aberdeen professors would not talk. When I was at the English church in Aberdeen I happened to be espied by Lady Di. Middleton, whom I had sometime seen in London; she told what she had seen to Mr. Boyd, Lord Errol's brother, who wrote us an invitation to Lord Errol's house, called Slanes Castle. We went thither on the next day (24th of August), and found a house, not old, except but one tower, built up on the margin of the sea upon a rock, scarce accessible

cessible from the sea; at one corner a tower makes a perpendicular continuation of the lateral surface of the rock, so that it is impracticable to walk round; the house inclosed a square court, and on all sides within the court is a piazza or gallery two stories high. We came in as we were invited to dinner, and after dinner offered to go; but Lady Errol sent us word by Mr. Boyd, that if we went before Lord Errol came home we must never be forgiven, and ordered out the coach to shew us two curiosities. We were first conducted by Mr. Boyd to Dunbuys, or the yellow rock. Dunbuys is a rock consisting of two protuberances, each perhaps one hundred yards round, joined together by a narrow neck, and separated from the land by a very narrow channel or gully. These rocks are the haunts of sea-fowl, whose clang, though this is not their season, we heard at a distance. The eggs and the young are gathered here in great numbers at the time of breeding. There is a bird here called a coote, which though not much bigger than a duck lays a larger egg than a goose. We went then to see the Buller or Boulloir of Buchan: Buchan is the name of the district, and the Buller is a small creek or gulf into which the sea flows through an arch of the rock. We walked round it, and saw it black at a great depth. It has its name from the violent ebullition of the water, when high winds or high tides drive it up the arch into the basin. Walking a little further I spied some boats, and told my companions that we would go into the Buller and examine it. There was no danger; all was calm; we went through the arch, and found ourselves in a narrow gulf surrounded by craggy rocks, of height not stupendous, but to a Mediterranean visitor uncommon. On each side was a cave, of which

which the fishermen knew not the extent, in which smugglers hide their goods; and sometimes parties of pleasure take a dinner.

I am, &c.

* * I think I grow better.



LETTER LXXVII.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAREST MADAM,

Skie, Sept. 6, 1773.

I AM now looking on the sea from a house of Sir Alexander Macdonald in the isle of Skie. Little did I once think of seeing this region of obscurity, and little did you once expect a salutation from this verge of European life. I have now the pleasure of going where nobody goes, and seeing what nobody sees. Our design is to visit several of the smaller islands, and then pass over to the south west of Scotland.

I returned from the fight of Buller's Buchan to Lord Errol's, and, having seen his library, had for a time only to look upon the sea, which rolled between us and Norway. Next morning, August 25th, we continued our journey through a country not uncultivated, but so denuded of its woods, that in all this journey I had not travelled an hundred yards between hedges, or seen five trees fit for the carpenter. A few small plantations may be found, but I believe scarcely any thirty years old; at least, as I do not forget to tell, they are all posterior to the Union. This day we dined
with

with a country gentleman, who has in his grounds the remains of a Druid's temple, which when it is complete is nothing more than a circle or double circle of stones, placed at equal distances, with a flat stone, perhaps an altar, at a certain point, and a stone taller than the rest at the opposite point. The tall stone is erected I think at the south. Of these circles there are many in all the unfrequented parts of the island. The inhabitants of these parts respect them as memorials of the sepulture of some illustrious person. Here I saw a few trees. We lay at Bamff.

August 26th, We dined at Elgin, where we saw the ruins of a noble cathedral; the chapter-house is yet standing. A great part of Elgin is built with small piazzas to the lower story. We went on to Foris, over the heath where Macbeth met the witches, but had no adventure; only in the way we saw for the first time some houses with fruit trees about them. The improvements of the Scotch are for immediate profit, they do not yet think it quite worth their while to plant what will not produce something to be eaten or sold in a very little time. We rested at Foris.

A very great proportion of the people are bare-foot, if one may judge by the rest of the dress, to send out boys without shoes into the streets or ways; there are however more beggars than I have ever seen in England, they beg if not silently yet very modestly.

Next day we came to Nairn, a miserable town, but a royal burgh, of which the chief annual magistrate is styled Lord Provost. In the neighbourhood we saw the castle of the old Thane of Cawdor. There is one ancient tower with its battlements and winding stairs yet remaining; the rest of the house is, though not modern, of later erection.

On

On the 28th, we went to Fort George, which is accounted the most regular fortification in the island. The major of artillery walked with us round the walls, and shewed us the principles upon which every part was constructed, and the way in which it could be defended. We dined with the governor Sir Eyre Coote and his officers. It was a very pleasant and instructive day, but nothing puts my honoured Mistress out of my mind.

At night we came to Inverness, the last considerable town in the north, where we staid all the next day, for it was Sunday, and saw the ruins of what is called Macbeth's castle. It never was a large house, but was strongly situated. From Inverness we were to travel on horseback.

August 30th, we set out with four horses. We had two highlanders to run by us, who were active, officious, civil, and hardy. Our journey was for many miles along a military way made upon the banks of Lough Ness, a water about eighteen miles long, but not I think half a mile broad. Our horses were not bad, and the way was very pleasant; the rock out of which the road was cut was covered with birch trees, fern, and heath. The lake below was beating its bank by a gentle wind, and the rocks beyond the water on the right stood sometimes horrid and wild, and sometimes opened into a kind of bay, in which there was a spot of cultivated ground yellow with corn. In one part of the way we had trees on both sides for perhaps half a mile.—Such a length of shade perhaps Scotland cannot shew in any other place.

You are not to suppose that here are to be any more towns or inns. We came to a cottage which they call the general's hut, where we alighted to dine,

dine, and had eggs and bacon, and mutton, with wine, rum, and whiskey. I had water.

At a bridge over the river, which runs into the Nels, the rocks rise on three sides, with a direction almost perpendicular, to a great height; they are in part covered with trees, and exhibit a kind of dreadful magnificence;—standing like the barriers of nature placed to keep different orders of being in perpetual separation. Near this bridge is the Fall of Fiers, a famous cataract, of which, by clambering over the rocks, we obtained a view. The water was low, and therefore we had only the pleasure of knowing that rain would make it at once pleasing and formidable; there will then be a mighty flood, foaming along a rocky channel, frequently obstructed by protuberances and exasperated by reverberation, at last precipitated with a sudden descent, and lost in the depth of a gloomy chasm.

We came somewhat late to Fort Augustus, where the lieutenant governor met us beyond the gates, and apologised that at that hour he could not, by the rules of a garrison, admit us otherwise than at a narrow door which only one can enter at a time. We were well entertained and well lodged, and next morning, after having viewed the fort, we pursued our journey.

Our way now lay over the mountains, which are not to be passed by climbing them directly, but by traversing, so that as we went forward we saw our baggage following us below in a direction exactly contrary. There is in these ways much labour but little danger, and perhaps other places of which very terrific representations are made are not in themselves more formidable. These roads have all been made by hewing the rock away with pickaxes, or bursting it with gunpowder. The stones so separated are often piled loose
as

as a wall by the way-side. We saw an inscription importing the year in which one of the regiments made two thousand yards of the road eastward.

After tedious travel of some hours we came to what I believe we must call a village, a place where there were three huts built of turf, at one of which we were to have our dinner and our bed, for we could not reach any better place that night. This place is called Enock in Glenmorison. The house in which we lodged was distinguished by a chimney, the rest had only a hole for the smoke. Here we had eggs, and mutton, and a chicken, and a sausage, and rum. In the afternoon tea was made by a very decent girl in a printed linen; she engaged me so much, that I made her a present of Cocker's arithmetick.

I am, &c.



LETTER LXXVIII.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAREST MADAM,

Skie, Sept. 14, 1773.

THE post, which comes but once a week into these parts, is so soon to go that I have not time to go on where I left off in my last letter. I have been several days in the island of Raarfa, and am now again in the isle of Skie, but at the other end of it.

Skie is almost equally divided between the two great families of Macdonald and Macleod, other proprietors having only small districts. The two
great

great lords do not know within twenty square miles the contents of their own territories.

—— kept up but ill the reputation of Highland hospitality; we are now with Macleod, quite at the other end of the island, where there is a fine young gentleman and fine ladies. The ladies are studying Earse. I have a cold, and am miserably deaf, and am troublesome to Lady Macleod; I force her to speak loud, but she will seldom speak loud enough.

Raarfa is an island about fifteen miles long and two broad, under the dominion of one gentleman who has three sons and ten daughters; the eldest is the beauty of this part of the world, and has been polished at Edinburgh: they sing and dance, and without expence have upon their table most of what sea, air, or earth can afford. I intended to have written about Raarfa, but the post will not wait longer than while I send my compliments to my dear master and little mistresses.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R LXXIX.

TO MRS. T H R A L E.

DEAREST MADAM,

Skie, Sept. 21, 1773.

I AM so vexed at the necessity of sending yesterday so short a letter, that I purpose to get a long letter beforehand by writing something every day, which I may the more easily do, as a cold makes me now too deaf to take the usual pleasure in

in conversation. Lady Macleod is very good to me, and the place at which we now are, is equal in strength of situation, in the wildness of the adjacent country, and in the plenty and elegance of the domestick entertainment, to a castle in Gothick romances. The sea with a little island is before us; cascades play within view. Close to the house is the formidable skeleton of an old castle probably Danish, and the whole mass of building stands upon a protuberance of rock, inaccessible till of late but by a pair of stairs on the sea side, and secure in ancient times against any enemy that was likely to invade the kingdom of Skie.

Macleod has offered me an island; if it were not too far off I should hardly refuse it: my island would be pleasanter than Brighthelmston, if you and my master could come to it; but I cannot think it pleasant to live quite alone.

Oblitusque meorum, obliviscendus et illis.

That I should be elated by the dominion of an island to forgetfulness of my friends at Streatham I cannot believe, and I hope never to deserve that they should be willing to forget me.

It has happened that I have been often recognised in my journey where I did not expect it. At Aberdeen I found one of my acquaintance professor of physick; turning aside to dine with a country gentleman, I was owned at table by one who had seen me at a philosophical lecture; at Macdonald's I was claimed by a naturalist, who wanders about the islands to pick up curiosities; and I had once in London attracted the notice of Lady Macleod. I will now go on with my account.

The Highland girl made tea, and looked and talked not inelegantly; her father was by no means

means an ignorant or a weak man; there were books in the cottage, among which were some volumes of Prideaux's *Connection*: this man's conversation we were glad of while we staid. He has been *out*, as they call it, in forty-five, and still retained his old opinions. He was going to America, because his rent was raised beyond what he thought himself able to pay.

At night our beds were made, but we had some difficulty in persuading ourselves to lie down in them, though we had put on our own sheets; at last we ventured, and I slept very soundly in the vale of Glenmorrisson, amidst the rocks and mountains. Next morning our landlord liked us so well, that he walked some miles with us for our company, through a country so wild and barren that the proprietor does not, with all his pressure upon his tenants, raise more than four hundred pounds a-year for near one hundred square miles, or sixty thousand acres. He let us know that he had forty head of black cattle, an hundred goats, and an hundred sheep, upon a farm that he remembered let at five pounds a-year, but for which he now paid twenty. He told us some stories of their march into England. At last he left us, and we went forward, winding among mountains, sometimes green and sometimes naked, commonly so steep as not easily to be climbed by the greatest vigour and activity: our way was often crossed by little rivulets, and we were entertained with small streams trickling from the rocks, which after having rains must be tremendous torrents.

About noon we came to a small glen, so they call a valley, which compared with other places appeared rich and fertile; here our guides desired us to stop, that the horses might graze, for the journey was very laborious, and no more grass would be found. We made no difficulty of compliance,

pliance, and I sat down to take notes on a green bank, with a small stream running at my feet, in the midst of savage solitude, with mountains before me, and on either hand covered with heath. I looked around me, and wondered that I was not more affected, but the mind is not at all times equally ready to be put in motion; if my mistress and master and Queeney had been there we should have produced some reflections among us, either poetical or philosophical, for though *solitude be the nurse of woe*, conversation is often the parent of remarks and discoveries.

In about an hour we remounted, and pursued our journey. The lake by which we had travelled for some time ended in a river, which we passed by a bridge, and came to another glen, with a collection of huts, called Auknashealds; the huts were generally built of clods of earth, held together by the intertexture of vegetable fibres, of which earth there are great levels in Scotland which they call mosses. Moss in Scotland is bog in Ireland, and moss-trooper is bog-trotter: there was, however, one hut built of loose stones, piled up with great thickness into a strong though not solid wall. From this house we obtained some great pails of milk, and having brought bread with us, were very liberally regaled. The inhabitants, a very coarse tribe, ignorant of any language but Earse, gathered so fast about us, that if we had not had Highlanders with us, they might have caused more alarm than pleasure; they are called the Clan of Macrae.

We had been told that nothing gratified the Highlanders so much as snuff and tobacco, and had accordingly stored ourselves with both at Fort Augustus. Boswell opened his treasure, and gave them each a piece of tobacco roll. We had more bread than we could eat for the present, and were
more

more liberal than provident. Boswell cut it in slices, and gave them an opportunity of tasting wheaten bread for the first time. I then got some halfpence for a shilling, and made up the deficiencies of Boswell's distribution, who had given some money among the children. We then directed that the mistress of the stone house should be asked what we must pay her: she, who perhaps had never before sold any thing but cattle, knew not, I believe, well what to ask, and referred herself to us: we obliged her to make some demand, and one of the Highlanders settled the account with her at a shilling. One of the men advised her, with the cunning that clowns never can be without, to ask more; but she said that a shilling was enough. We gave her half-a-crown, and she offered part of it again. The Macraes were so well pleased with our behaviour, that they declared it the best day they had seen since the time of the old Laird of Macleod, who, I suppose, like us, stopped in their valley, as he was travelling to Skie.

We were mentioning this view of the Highlander's life at Macdonald's, and mentioning the Macraes with some degree of pity, when a Highland lady informed us that we might spare our tenderness, for she doubted not but the woman who supplied us with milk was mistress of thirteen or fourteen milch cows.

I cannot forbear to interrupt my narrative. Boswell, with some of his troublesome kindness, has informed this family and reminded me that the 18th of September is my birth-day. The return of my birth-day, if I remember it, fills me with thoughts which it seems to be the general care of humanity to escape. I can now look back upon threescore and four years, in which little has been done, and little has been enjoyed;

a life diversified by misery, spent part in the flaggishness of penury, and part under the violence of pain, in gloomy discontent or importunate distress. But perhaps I am better than I should have been if I had been less afflicted. With this I will try to be content.

In proportion as there is less pleasure in retrospective considerations, the mind is more disposed to wander forward into futurity; but at sixty-four what promises, however liberal, of imaginary good can futurity venture to make? yet something will be always promised, and some promises will always be credited. I am hoping and I am praying that I may live better in the time to come, whether long or short, than I have yet lived, and in the solace of that hope endeavour to repose. Dear Queeney's day is next, I hope she at sixty-four will have less to regret.

I will now complain no more, but tell my mistress of my travels.

After we left the Macraes we travelled on through a country like that which we passed in the morning. The Highlands are very uniform, for there is little variety in universal barrenness; the rocks, however, are not all naked, some have grass on their sides, and birches and alders on their tops, and in the vallies are often broad and clear streams, which have little depth, and commonly run very quick: the channels are made by the violence of the wintry floods; the quickness of the stream is in proportion to the declivity of the descent, and the breadth of the channel makes the water shallow in a dry season.

There are red deer and roebucks in the mountains, but we found only goats in the road, and had very little entertainment as we travelled either for the eye or ear. There are, I fancy, no singing birds in the Highlands.

Towards

Towards night we came to a very formidable hill called Rattiken, which we climbed with more difficulty than we had yet experienced, and at last came to Glanelg, a place on the sea-side opposite to Skie. We were by this time weary and disgusted, nor was our humour much mended by our inn, which, though it was built of lime and slate, the Highlander's description of a house which he thinks magnificent, had neither wine, bread, eggs, nor any thing that we could eat or drink. When we were taken up stairs, a dirty fellow bounced out of the bed where one of us was to lie. Boswell blustered, but nothing could be got. At last a gentleman in the neighbourhood, who heard of our arrival, sent us rum and white sugar. Boswell was now provided for in part, and the landlord prepared some mutton chops, which we could not eat, and killed two hens, of which Boswell made his servant broil a limb, with what effect I know not. We had a lemon and a piece of bread, which supplied me with my supper. When the repast was ended, we began to deliberate upon bed; Mrs. Boswell had warned us that we should *catch something*, and had given us *sheats* for our *security*, for ——— and ———, she said, came back from Skie, so scratching themselves. I thought sheets a slender defence against the confederacy with which we were threatened, and by this time our Highlanders had found a place where they could get some hay: I ordered hay to be laid thick upon the bed, and slept upon it in my great coat: Boswell laid sheets upon his bed, and reposed in linen like a gentleman. The horses were turned out to grass, with a man to watch them. The hill Rattiken and the inn at Glanelg were the only things of which we, or travellers yet more delicate, could find any pretensions to complain.

Sept. 2d, I rose rustling from the hay, and went to tea, which I forget whether we found or brought. We saw the isle of Skie before us, darkening the horizon with its rocky coast. A boat was procured, and we launched into one of the straits of the Atlantick ocean. We had a passage of about twelve miles to the point where ——— resided, having come from his seat in the middle of the island to a small house on the shore, as we believe, that he might with less reproach entertain us meanly. If he aspired to meanness, his retrograde ambition was completely gratified, but he did not succeed equally in escaping reproach. He had no cook, nor I suppose much provision, nor had the Lady the common decencies of her tea-table: we picked up our sugar with our fingers. Boswell was very angry, and reproached him with his improper parsimony; I did not much reflect upon the conduct of a man with whom I was not likely to converse as long at any other time.

You will now expect that I should give you some account of the isle of Skie, of which, though I have been twelve days upon it, I have little to say. It is an island perhaps fifty miles long, so much indented by inlets of the sea, that there is no part of it removed from the water more than six miles. No part that I have seen is plain; you are always climbing or descending, and every step is upon rock or mire. A walk upon ploughed ground in England is a dance upon carpets compared to the toilsome drudgery of wandering in Skie. There is neither town nor village in the island, nor have I seen any house but Macleod's, that is not much below your habitation at Bright-helmstone. In the mountains there are stags and roebucks, but no hares, and few rabbits; nor have I seen any thing that inter-
d me as a zoo-
logist,

logist, except an otter, bigger than I thought an otter could have been.

You are perhaps imagining that I am withdrawn from the gay and busy world into regions of peace and pastoral felicity, and am enjoying the reliques of the golden age; that I am surveying nature's magnificence from a mountain, or remarking her minuter beauties on the flowery bank of a winding rivulet; that I am invigorating myself in the sunshine, or delighting my imagination with being hidden from the invasion of human evils and human passions in the darkness of a thicket; that I am busy in gathering shells and pebbles on the shore, or contemplative on a rock, from which I look upon the water, and consider how many waves are rolling between me and Streatham.

The use of travelling is to regulate imagination by reality, and instead of thinking how things may be, to see them as they are. Here are mountains which I should once have climbed, but to climb steeps is now very laborious, and to descend them dangerous; and I am now content with knowing, that by scrambling up a rock, I shall only see other rocks, and a wider circuit of barren desolation. Of streams, we have here a sufficient number, but they murmur not upon pebbles, but upon rocks. Of flowers, if Chloris herself were here, I could present her only with the bloom of heath. Of lawns and thickets, he must read that would know them, for here is little sun and no shade. On the sea I look from my window, but am not much tempted to the shore; for since I came to this island, almost every breath of air has been a storm, and what is worse, a storm with all its severity, but without its magnificence, for the sea is here so broken into channels

nels that there is not a sufficient volume of water either for lofty surges or a loud roar.

On Sept. 6th, we left ——— to visit Raarfa, the island which I have already mentioned. We were to cross part of Skie on horseback; a mode of travelling very uncomfortable, for the road is so narrow, where any road can be found, that only one can go, and so craggy that the attention can never be remitted; it allows therefore, neither the gaiety of conversation, nor the laxity of solitude; nor has it in itself the amusement of much variety, as it affords only all the possible transpositions of bog, rock, and rivulet. Twelve miles, by computation, make a reasonable journey for a day.

At night we came to a tenant's house, of the first rank of tenants, where we were entertained better than at the landlord's. There were books both English and Latin. Company gathered about us, and we heard some talk of the second fight, and some talk of the events of forty-five; a year which will not soon be forgotten among the islanders. The next day we were confined by a storm. The company, I think, increased, and our entertainment was not only hospitable but elegant. At night, a minister's sister, in very fine brocade, sung Earle songs; I wished to know the meaning, but the Highlanders are not much used to scholastick questions, and no translation could be obtained.

Next day, Sept. 8th, the weather allowed us to depart; a good boat was provided us, and we went to Raarfa under the conduct of Mr. Malcolm Macleod, a gentleman who conducted Prince Charles through the mountains in his distresses. The Prince, he says, was more active than himself; they were, at least, one night without any shelter.

The

The wind blew enough to give the boat a kind of dancing agitation, and in about three or four hours we arrived at Raarfa, where we were met by the Laird and his friends upon the shore. Raarfa, for such is his title, is master of two islands; upon the smaller of which, called Rona, he has only flocks and herds. Rona gives title to his eldest son. The money which he raises annually by rent from all his dominions, which contain at least fifty thousand acres, is not believed to exceed two hundred and fifty pounds; but as he keeps a large farm in his own hands, he sells every year great numbers of cattle, which add to his revenue, and his table is furnished from the farm and from the sea, with very little expence, except for those things this country does not produce, and of those he is very liberal. The wine circulates vigorously, and the tea, chocolate, and coffee, however they are got, are always at hand.

I am, &c.

We are this morning trying to get out of Skie.

L E T T E R LXXX.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.



DEAR MADAM,

Skie, Sept. 24, 1773.

I AM still in Skie. Do you remember the song?

Ev'ry island is a prison,
Strongly guarded by the sea.

We

We have at one time no boat, and at another may have too much wind; but of our reception here we have no reason to complain. We are now with Colonel Macleod, in a more pleasant place than I thought Skie could afford. Now to the narrative.

We were received at Raarfa on the sea side, and after clambering with some difficulty over the rocks, a labour which the traveller, wherever he reposes himself on land, must in these islands be contented to endure; we were introduced into the house, which one of the company called the Court of Raarfa, with politeness which not the Court of Versailles could have thought defective. The house is not large, though we were told in our passage that it had eleven fine rooms, nor magnificently furnished, but our utensils were most commonly silver. We went up into a dining room, about as large as your blue room, where we had something given us to eat, and tea and coffee.

Raarfa himself is a man of no elegant appearance, and of manners uncommonly refined. Lady Raarfa makes no very sublime appearance for a sovereign, but is a good housewife, and a very prudent and diligent conductress of her family. Miss Flora Macleod is a celebrated beauty; has been admired at Edinburgh; dresses her head very high; and has manners so lady like, that I wish her head-dress was lower. The rest of the nine girls are all pretty; the youngest is between Queeney and Lucy. The youngest boy, of four years old, runs barefoot, and wandered with us over the rocks to see a mill. I believe he would walk on that rough ground without shoes ten miles in a day.

The Laird of Raarfa has sometimes disputed the chieftainry of the clan with Macleod of Skie, but being much inferior in extent of possessions,
has,

has, I suppose, been forced to desist. Raarfa and its provinces have descended to its present possession through a succession of four hundred years, without any increase or diminution. It was indeed lately in danger of forfeiture, but the old Laird joined some prudence with his zeal, and when Prince Charles landed in Scotland, made over his estate to his son, the present Laird, and led one hundred men of Raarfa into the field, with officers of his own family. Eighty-six only came back after the last battle. The Prince was hidden, in his distress, two nights at Raarfa, and the king's troops burnt the whole country, and killed some of the cattle.

You may guess at the opinions that prevail in this country; they are, however, content with fighting for their king; they do not drink for him. We had no foolish healths. At night, unexpectedly to us who were strangers, the carpet was taken up; the fiddler of the family came up, and a very vigorous and general dance was begun. As I told you, we were two-and-thirty at supper; there were full as many dancers; for though all who supped did not dance, some danced of the young people who did not sup. Raarfa himself danced with his children, and old Malcolm, in his filibeg, was as nimble as when he led the Prince over the mountains. When they had danced themselves weary, two tables were spread, and I suppose at least twenty dishes were upon them. In this country some preparations of milk are always served up at supper, and sometimes in the place of tarts at dinner. The table was not coarsely heaped, but at once plentiful and elegant. They do not pretend to make a loaf; there are only cakes, commonly of oats or barley, but they made me very nice cakes of wheat flour. I always sat at
the

the left hand of Lady Raarsa, and young Macleod of Skie, the chieftain of the clan, sat on the right.

After supper a young lady, who was visiting, sung Earle songs, in which Lady Raarsa joined prettily enough, but not gracefully; the young ladies sustained the chorus better. They are very little used to be asked questions, and not well prepared with answers. When one of the songs was over, I asked the princess that sat next me, *What is that about?* I question if she conceived that I did not understand it. For the entertainment of the company, said she. But, Madam, what is the meaning of it? It is a love song. This was all the intelligence that I could obtain; nor have I been able to procure the translation of a single line of Earle.

At twelve it was bed time. I had a chamber to myself, which, in eleven rooms to forty people, was more than my share. How the company and the family were distributed is not easy to tell. Macleod the chieftain, and Boswell, and I, had all single chambers on the first floor. There remained eight rooms only for at least seven-and-thirty lodgers. I suppose they put up temporary beds in the dining room, where they stowed all the young ladies. There was a room above stairs with six beds, in which they put ten men. The rest in my next.

LETTER LXXXI.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAREST MADAM, Oßich in Skie, Sept. 30, 1773.

I AM still confined in Skie. We were unskilful travellers, and imagined that the sea was an open road which we could pass at pleasure; but we have now learned with some pain, that we may still wait for a long time the caprices of the equinoctial winds, and sit reading or writing as I now do, while the tempest is rolling the sea, or roaring in the mountains. I am now no longer pleased with the delay; you can hear from me but seldom, and I cannot at all hear from you. It comes into my mind that some evil may happen, or that I might be of use while I am away. But these thoughts are vain; the wind is violent and adverse, and our boat cannot yet come. I must content myself with writing to you, and hoping that you will sometime receive my letter. Now to my narrative.

Sept. 9th, Having passed the night as is usual, I rose, and found the dining room full of company; we feasted and talked, and when the evening came it brought musick and dancing. Young Macleod, the great proprietor of Skie and head of his clan, was very distinguishable; a young man of nineteen; bred a while at St. Andrews, and afterwards at Oxford; a pupil of G. Strahan. He is a young man of a mind as much advanced as I have ever known; very elegant of manners, and very graceful in his person. He has the full spirit of a feudal chief; and I was very ready to accept his invitation to Dunvegan. All Raarfa's children

children are beautiful. The ladies all, except the eldest, are in the morning dressed in their hair. The true Highlander never wears more than a ribbon on her head till she is married.

On the third day Boswell went out with old Malcolm to see a ruined castle, which he found less entire than was promised, but he saw the country. I did not go, for the castle was perhaps ten miles off, and there is no riding at Raarsa, the whole island being rock or mountain, from which the cattle often fall and are destroyed. It is very barren, and maintains, as near as I could collect, about seven hundred inhabitants, perhaps ten to a square mile. In these countries you are not to suppose that you shall find villages or inclosures. The traveller wanders through a naked desert, gratified sometimes, but rarely, with the sight of cows, and now and then finds a heap of loose stones and turf in a cavity between rocks, where a being born with all those powers which education expands, and all those sensations which culture refines, is condemned to shelter itself from the wind and rain. Philosophers there are who try to make themselves believe that this life is happy, but they believe it only while they are saying it, and never yet produced conviction in a single mind; he, whom want of words or images sunk into silence, still thought, as he thought before, that privation of pleasure can never please, and that content is not to be much envied, when it has no other principle than ignorance of good.

This gloomy tranquillity, which some may call fortitude, and others wisdom, was, I believe, for a long time to be very frequently found in these dens of poverty: every man was content to live like his neighbours, and never wandering from home, saw no mode of life preferable to his own, except at the house of the laird, or the laird's nearest

est

est relations, whom he considered as a superior order of beings, to whose luxuries or honours he had no pretensions. But the end of this reverence and submission seems now approaching; the Highlanders have learned that there are countries less bleak and barren than their own, where, instead of working for the laird, every man may till his own ground, and eat the produce of his own labour. Great numbers have been induced by this discovery to go every year for some time past to America. Macdonald and Macleod of Skie have lost many tenants and many labourers, but Raarfa has not yet been forsaken by a single inhabitant.

Rona is yet more rocky and barren than Raarfa, and though it contains perhaps four thousand acres, is possessed only by a herd of cattle and the keepers.

I find myself not very able to walk upon the mountains, but one day I went out to see the walls yet standing of an ancient chapel. In almost every island the superstitious votaries of the Romish church erected places of worship, in which the drones of convents or cathedrals performed the holy offices, but by the active zeal of Protestant devotion, almost all of them have sunk into ruin. The chapel at Raarfa is now only considered as the burying-place of the family, and I suppose of the whole island.

We would now have gone away and left room for others to enjoy the pleasures of this little court, but the wind detained us till the 12th, when, though it was Sunday, we thought it proper to snatch the opportunity of a calm day. Raarfa accompanied us in his six oared boat, which he said was his coach and six. It is indeed the vehicle in which the ladies take the air and pay their visits, but they have taken very little care for accommodations.

commodations. There is no way in or out of the boat for a woman, but by being carried; and in the boat thus dignified with a pompous name, there is no seat but an occasional bundle of straw. Thus we left Raarfa; the seat of plenty, civility, and cheerfulness.

We dined at a publick house at Port Re; so called because one of the Scottish kings landed there, in a progress through the western isles. Raarfa paid the reckoning privately. We then got on horseback, and by a short but very tedious journey came to Kingsburgh, at which the same king lodged after he landed. Here I had the honour of saluting the far famed Miss Flora Macdonald, who conducted the Prince, dressed as her maid, through the English forces from the island of Lewes; and, when she came to Skie, dined with the English officers, and left her maid below. She must then have been a very young lady; she is now not old; of a pleasing person, and elegant behaviour. She told me that she thought herself honoured by my visit; and I am sure that whatever regard she bestowed on me was liberally repaid. "If thou likest her opinions, thou wilt praise her virtue." She was carried to London, but dismissed without a trial, and came down with Malcolm Macleod, against whom sufficient evidence could not be procured. She and her husband are poor, and are going to try their fortune in America.

Sic rerum volvitur orbis.

At Kingsburgh we were very liberally feasted, and I slept in the bed on which the Prince reposed in his distress; the sheets which he used were never put to any meaner offices, but were wrapped up by the lady of the house, and at last, according to

to her desire, were laid round her in her grave. These are not Whigs.

On the 13th, travelling partly on horseback where we could not row, and partly on foot where we could not ride, we came to Dunvegan, which I have described already. Here, though poor Macleod had been left by his grandfather overwhelmed with debts, we had another exhibition of feudal hospitality. There were two stags in the house, and venison came to the table every day in its various forms. Macleod, besides his estate in Skie, larger I suppose than some English counties, is proprietor of nine inhabited isles; and of his islands uninhabited I doubt if he very exactly knows the number. I told him that he was a mighty monarch. Such dominions fill an Englishman with envious wonder; but when he surveys the naked mountain, and treads the quaking moor; and wanders over the wild regions of gloomy barrenness, his wonder may continue, but his envy ceases. The unprofitableness of these vast domains can be conceived only by the means of positive instances. The heir of *Col*, an island not far distant, has lately told me how wealthy he should be if he could let *Rum*, another of his islands, for twopence half-penny an acre; and Macleod has an estate, which the surveyor reports to contain eighty thousand acres, rented at six hundred pounds a-year.

While we were at Dunvegan, the wind was high, and the rain violent, so that we were not able to put forth a boat to fish in the sea, or to visit the adjacent islands, which may be seen from the house; but we filled up the time as we could, sometimes by talk, sometimes by reading. I have never wanted books in the isle of Skie.

We were visited one day by the Laird and Lady of Muck, one of the western islands, two miles long,

long, and three quarters of a mile high. He has half his island in his own culture, and upon the other half live one hundred and fifty dependents, who not only live upon the product, but export corn sufficient for the payment of their rent.

Lady Macleod has a son and four daughters; they have lived long in England, and have the language and manners of English ladies. We lived with them very easily. The hospitality of this remote region is like that of the golden age. We have found ourselves treated at every house as if we came to confer a benefit.

We were eight days at Dunvegan, but we took the first opportunity which the weather afforded, after the first days, of going away, and, on the 21st, went to Ulinish, where we were well entertained, and wandered a little after curiosities. In the afternoon an interval of calm sunshine courted us out to see a cave on the shore famous for its echo. When we went into the boat, one of our companions was asked in Earse, by the boatmen, who they were that came with him? He gave us characters, I suppose, to our advantage, and was asked, in the spirit of the Highlands, whether I could recite a long series of ancestors? The boatmen said, as I perceived afterwards, that they heard the cry of an English ghost. This, Boswell says, disturbed him. We came to the cave, and clambering up the rocks, came to an arch, open at one end, one hundred and eighty feet long, thirty broad in the broadest part, and about thirty high. There was no echo; such is the fidelity of report; but I saw what I had never seen before, muscles and whilks in their natural state. There was another arch in the rock, open at both ends.

Sept 23d, We removed to Talisker, a house occupied by Mr. Macleod, a Lieutenant Colonel
in

in the Dutch service. Talisker has been long in the possession of gentlemen, and therefore has a garden well cultivated; and, what is here very rare, is shaded by trees: a place where the imagination is more amused cannot easily be found. The mountains about it are of great height, with waterfalls succeeding one another so fast, that as one ceases to be heard another begins. Between the mountains there is a small valley extending to the sea, which is not far off, beating upon a coast very difficult of access.

Two nights before our arrival two boats were driven upon this coast by the tempest, one of them had a pilot that knew the passage, the second followed, but a third missed the true course, and was driven forward with great danger of being forced into the vast ocean, but however gained at last some other island. The crews crept to Talisker, almost lifeless with wet, cold, fatigue, and terror, but the lady took care of them. She is a woman of more than common qualifications; having travelled with her husband, she speaks four languages.

You find that all the islanders, even in these recesses of life, are not barbarous. One of the ministers who had adhered to us almost all the time is an excellent scholar. We have now with us the young Laird of Col, who is heir, perhaps, to two hundred square miles of land. He has first studied at Aberdeen, and afterwards gone to Hertfordshire to learn agriculture, being much impressed with desire of improvement: he likewise has the notions of a chief, and keeps a piper. At Macleod's the bagpipe always played while we were dining.

Col has undertaken, by the permission of the waves and wind, to carry us about several of the islands, with which he is acquainted enough to

shew us whatever curious is given by nature or left by antiquity; but we grew afraid of deviating from our way home, lest we should be shut up for months upon some little protuberance of rock, that just appears above the sea, and perhaps is scarcely marked upon a map.

You remember the Doge of Genoa, who being asked what struck him most at the French court? answered, "Myself." I cannot think many things here more likely to affect the fancy than to see Johnson ending his sixty-fourth year in the wilderness of the Hebrides. But now I am here, it will gratify me very little to return without seeing, or doing my best to see what those places afford. I have a desire to instruct myself in the whole system of pastoral life; but I know not whether I shall be able to perfect the idea. However I have many pictures in my mind, which I could not have had without this journey, and should have passed it with great pleasure had you, and Master, and Queeney been in the party. We should have excited the attention and enlarged the observation of each other, and obtained many pleasing topicks of future conversation. As it is, I travel with my mind too much at home, and perhaps miss many things worthy of observation, or pass them with transient notice; so that the images, for want of that reimpresion which discussion and comparison produce, easily fade away; but I keep a book of remarks, and Boswell writes a regular journal of our travels, which, I think, contains as much of what I say and do as of all other occurrences together; "for such a faithful chronicler as Griffith."

I hope, dearest Madam, you are equally careful to reposit proper memorials of all that happens to you and your family, and then when we meet we shall tell our stories. I wish you had gone
this

this summer in your usual splendour to Brighthelmstone.

Mr. Thrale probably wonders how I live all this time without sending to him for money. Traveling in Scotland is dear enough, dearer in proportion to what the country affords than in England, but residence in the isles is unexpensive. Company is, I think, considered as a supply of pleasure, and a relief of that tediousness of life which is felt in every place, elegant or rude. Of wine and punch they are very liberal, for they get them cheap; but as there is no custom-house on the Island, they can hardly be considered as smugglers. Their punch is made without lemons, or any substitute.

Their tables are very plentiful; but a very nice man would not be pampered. As they have no meat but as they kill it, they are obliged to live while it lasts upon the same flesh. They kill a sheep, and set mutton boiled and roast on the table together. They have fish both of the sea and of the brooks; but they can hardly conceive that it requires any sauce. To sauce in general they are strangers; now and then butter is melted, but I dare not always take, lest I should offend by disliking it. Barley-broath is a constant dish, and is made well in every house. A stranger, if he is prudent, will secure his share, for it is not certain that he will be able to eat any thing else.

Their meat being often newly killed is very tough, and as nothing is sufficiently subdued by the fire, is not easily to be eaten. Carving is here a very laborious employment, for the knives are never whetted. Table-knives are not of long subsistence in the Highlands; every man, while arms were a regular part of dress, had his knife and fork appendant to his dirk. Knives they now lay upon the table, but the handles are apt to shew

that they have been in other hands, and the blades have neither brightness nor edge.

Of silver there is no want ; and it will last long, for it is never cleaned. They are a nation just rising from barbarity ; long contented with necessities, now somewhat studious of convenience, but not yet arrived at delicate discriminations. Their linen is however both clean and fine. Bread, such as we mean by that name, I have never seen in the isle of Skie. They have ovens, for they bake their pies, but they never ferment their meal, nor mould a loaf. Cakes of oats and barley are brought to the table, but I believe wheat is reserved for strangers. They are commonly too hard for me, and therefore I take potatoes to my meat, and am sure to find them on almost every table.

They retain so much of the pastoral life, that some preparation of milk is commonly one of the dishes both at dinner and supper. Tea is always drank at the usual times ; but in the morning the table is polluted with a plate of slices of strong cheese. This is peculiar to the Highlands ; at Edinburgh there are always honey and sweet-meats on the morning tea-table.

Strong liquors they seem to love. Every man, perhaps woman, begins the day with a dram ; and the punch is made both at dinner and supper.

They have neither wood nor coal for fuel, but burn peat or turf in their chimnies. It is dug out of the moors or mosses, and makes a strong and lasting fire, not always very sweet, and somewhat apt to smoke the pot.

The houses of inferior gentlemen are very small, and every room serves many purposes. In the bed-rooms, perhaps, are laid up stores of different kinds ; and the parlour of the day is a bed-room at night. In the room which I inhabited last,
about

about fourteen feet square, there were three chests of drawers, a long chest for larger clothes, two closet cupboards, and the bed. Their rooms are commonly dirty, of which they seem to have little sensibility, and if they had more, clean floors would be difficultly kept, where the first step from the door is into the dirt. They are very much inclined to carpets, and seldom fail to lay down something under their feet, better or worse as they happen to be furnished.

The Highland dress, being forbidden by law, is very little used; sometimes it may be seen, but the English traveller is struck with nothing so much as the *nudité des piés* of the common people.

Skie is the greatest island, or the greatest but one, among the Hebrides. Of the soil I have already given some account, it is generally barren, but some spots are not wholly unfruitful. The gardens have apples and pears, cherries, strawberries, raspberries, currants, and gooseberries, but all the fruit that I have seen is small. They attempt to sow nothing but oats and barley. Oats constitute the bread corn of the place. Their harvest is about the beginning of October; and being so late, is very much subject to disappointments from the rains that follow the equinox. This year has been particularly disastrous. Their rainy season lasts from Autumn to Spring. They have seldom very hard frosts; nor was it ever known that a lake was covered with ice strong enough to bare a skater. The sea round them is always open. The snow falls but soon melts; only in 1771, they had a cold Spring, in which the island was so long covered with it, that many beasts, both wild and domestick, perished, and the whole country was reduced to distress, from which I know not if it is even yet recovered.

The

The animals here are not remarkably small; perhaps they recruit their breed from the main land. The cows are sometimes without horns. The horned and unhorned cattle are not accidental variations, but different species, they will however breed together.

October 3d, The wind is now changed, and if we snatch the moment of opportunity, an escape from this island is become practicable; I have no reason to complain of my reception, yet I long to be again at home.

You and my master may perhaps expect, after this description of Skie, some account of myself. My eye is, I am afraid, not fully recovered; my ears are not mended; my nerves seem to grow weaker, and I have been otherwise not as well as I sometimes am, but think myself lately better. This climate perhaps is not within my degree of healthy latitude.

Thus I have given my most honoured mistress the story of me and my little ramble. We are now going to some other isle, to what we know not, the wind will tell us.

I am, &c.

Compliments to Queeny, and Jack, and Lucy,
and all.

L E T-

L E T T E R LXXXII.

To MR. THRALE.

DEAR SIR,

Isle of Mull, Oct. 15, 1773.

SINCE I had the honour of writing to my mistress, we have been hindered from returning, by a tempest almost continual. We tried eight days ago to come hither, but were driven by the wind into the isle of Col, in which we were confined eight days. We hired a sloop to bring us hither, and hope soon to get to Edinburgh.

Having for many weeks had no letter, my longings are very great to be informed how all things are at home, as you and mistress allow me to call it. A letter will now perhaps meet me at Edinburgh, for I shall be expected to pass a few days at Lord Auchenleck's, and I beg to have my thoughts set at rest by a letter from you or my mistress.

Be so kind as to send either to Mrs. Williams or Mr. Levett, and if they want money, advance them ten pounds.

I hope my mistress keeps all my very long letters, longer than I ever wrote before. I shall perhaps spin out more before I have the happiness to tell you at home that I am

Your obliged humble servant.

L E T.

LETTER LXXXIII.

To MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

Mull, Oct. 15, 1773.

THOUGH I have written to Mr. Thrale, yet having a little more time than was promised me, I would not suffer the messenger to go without some token of my duty to my mistress, who, I suppose, expects the usual tribute of intelligence, a tribute which I am not now very able to pay.

October 3d, After having been detained by storms many days at Skie, we left it, as we thought, with a fair wind; but a violent gust, which Bob had a great mind to call a tempest, forced us into Coll, an obscure island; on which

—nulla campis
Arbor æstivâ recreatur aura.

There is literally no tree upon the island, part of it is a sandy waste, over which it would be really dangerous to travel in dry weather and with a high wind. It seems to be little more than one continued rock, covered from space to space with a thin layer of earth. It is, however, according to the Highland notion, very populous, and life is improved beyond the manners of Skie; for the huts are collected into little villages, and every one has a small garden of roots and cabbage. The laird has a new house built by his uncle, and an old castle inhabited by his ancestors. The young laird entertained us very liberally; he is heir, perhaps, to three hundred square miles of land, which, at ten shillings an acre, would bring him ninety-six thousand pounds a year. He is desirous

desirous of improving the agriculture of his country; and, in imitation of the Czar, travelled for improvement, and worked with his own hands upon a farm in Hertfordshire, in the neighbourhood of your uncle Sir Thomas Salusbury. He talks of doing useful things, and has introduced turnips for winter fodder. He has made a small essay towards a road.

Coll is but a barren place. Description has here few opportunities of spreading her colours. The difference of day and night is the only vicissitude. The succession of sunshine to rain, or of calms to tempests, we have not known; wind and rain have been our only weather.

At last, after about nine days, we hired a sloop; and having lain in it all night, with such accommodations as these miserable vessels can afford, were landed yesterday on the isle of Mull; from which we expect an easy passage into Scotland. I am sick in a ship, but recover by lying down.

I have not good health; I do not find that travelling much helps me. My nights are fatalent, though not in the utmost degree; and I have a weakness in my knees, which makes me very unable to walk.

Pray, dear Madam, let me have a long letter.

I am, &c.

L E T.

LETTER LXXXIV.

To MRS. THRALE.

HONOURED MISTRESS,

Inverary, Oct. 23, 1773.

MY last letters to you and my dear master were written from Mull, the third island of the Hebrides in extent. There is no post, and I took the opportunity of a gentleman's passage to the main land.

In Mull we were confined two days by the weather; on the third we got on horseback, and after a journey difficult and tedious, over rocks naked and valleys untracked, through a country of barrenness and solitude, we came, almost in the dark, to the sea side, weary and dejected, having met with nothing but water falling from the mountains that could raise any image of delight. Our company was the young Laird of Col and his servant. Col made every Maclean open his house where we came, and supply us with horses when we departed; but the horses of this country are small, and I was not mounted to my wish.

At the sea-side we found the ferry-boat departed; if it had been where it was expected, the wind was against us, and the hour was late, nor was it very desirable to cross the sea in darkness with a small boat. The Captain of a sloop that had been driven thither by the storms saw our distress, and as we were hesitating and deliberating, sent his boat, which, by Col's order, transported us to the isle of *Ulva*. We were introduced to Mr. Macquarry, the head of a small clan, whose ancestors have reigned in Ulva beyond memory, but who has reduced himself, by his negligence
and

and folly, to the necessity of selling this venerable patrimony.

On the next morning we passed the strait to *Inch Kenneth*, an island about a mile in length, and less than half a mile broad; in which Kenneth, a Scottish saint, established a small clerical college, of which the chapel walls are still standing. At this place I beheld a scene which I wish you and my master and Queeney had partaken.

The only family on the island is that of Sir Allan, the chief of the ancient and numerous clan of Maclean; the clan which claims the second place, yielding only to Macdonald in the line of battle. Sir Allan, a chieftain, a baronet, and a soldier, inhabits in this insulated desert a thatched hut with no chambers. Young Col, who owns him as his chief, and whose cousin was his lady, had, I believe, given him some notice of our visit; he received us with the soldier's frankness and the gentleman's elegance, and introduced us to his daughters, two young ladies who have not wanted education suitable to their birth, and who, in their cottage, neither forgot their dignity, nor affected to remember it. Do not you wish to have been with us?

Sir Allan's affairs are in disorder by the fault of his ancestors, and while he forms some scheme for retrieving them, he has retreated hither.

When our salutations were over, he showed us the island. We walked uncovered into the chapel, and saw in the reverend ruin the effects of precipitate reformation. The floor is covered with ancient grave-stones, of which the inscriptions are not now legible; and without, some of the chief families still continue the right of sepulture. The altar is not yet quite demolished; beside it, on the right side, is a bas relief of the Virgin with her child, and an angel hovering over her.

her. On the other side still stands a hand-bell, which, though it has no clapper, neither Presbyterian bigotry nor barbarian wantonness has yet taken away. The chapel is thirty-eight feet long, and eighteen broad. Boswell, who is very pious, went into it at night to perform his devotions, but came back in haste, for fear of spectres. Near the chapel is a fountain, to which the water, remarkably pure, is conveyed from a distant hill, through pipes laid by the Romish clergy, which still perform the office of conveyance, though they have never been repaired since Popery was suppressed.

We soon after went in to dinner, and wanted neither the comforts nor the elegancies of life. There were several dishes, and variety of liquors. The servants live in another cottage; in which, I suppose, the meat is dressed.

Towards evening, Sir Allan told us, that Sunday never passed over him like another day. One of the ladies read, and read very well, the evening service;—and Paradise was opened in the wild.

Next day, 18th, we went and wandered among the rocks on the shore, while the boat was busy in catching oysters, of which there is a great bed. Oysters lie upon the sand, one I think sticking to another, and cockles are found a few inches under the sand.

We then went in the boat to *Sondiland*, a little island very near. We found it a wild rock, of about ten acres; part naked, part covered with sand, out of which we picked shells; and part clothed with a thin layer of mould, on the grass of which a few sheep are sometimes fed. We then came back and dined. I passed part of the afternoon in reading, and in the evening one of the

the ladies played her harpsichord, and Boswell and Col danced a reel with the other.

On the 19th, we persuaded Sir Allan to launch his boat again, and go with us to Icolmkill, where the first great preacher of Christianity to the Scots built a church, and settled a monastery. In our way we stopped to examine a very uncommon cave on the coast of *Mull*. We had some difficulty to make our way over the vast masses of broken rocks that lie before the entrance, and at the mouth were embarrassed with stones, which the sea had accumulated, as at Brighthelmstone; but as we advanced, we reached a floor of soft sand, and as we left the light behind us, walked along a very spacious cavity, vaulted over head with an arch almost regular, by which a mountain was sustained, at least a very lofty rock. From this magnificent cavern went a narrow passage to the right hand, which we entered with a candle, and though it was obstructed with great stones, clambered over them to a second expansion of the cave, in which there lies a great square stone, which might serve as a table. The air here was very warm, but not oppressive, and the flame of the candle continued pyramidal. The cave goes onward to an unknown extent, but we were now one hundred and sixty yards under ground; we had but one candle, and had never heard of any that went further and came back; we therefore thought it prudent to return.

Going forward in our boat, we came to a cluster of rocks, black and horrid, which Sir Allan chose for the place where he would eat his dinner. We climbed till we got seats. The stores were opened, and the repast taken.

We then entered the boat again; the night came upon us; the wind rose; the sea swelled; and Boswell desired to be set on dry ground: we
how-

however pursued our navigation, and passed by several little islands, in the silent solemnity of faint moon-shine, seeing little, and hearing only the wind and the water. At last we reached the island; the venerable seat of ancient sanctity; where secret piety reposed, and where fallen greatness was repositied. The island has no house of entertainment, and we manfully made our bed in a farmer's barn. The description I hope to give you another time.

I am, &c.



L E T T E R LXXXV.

To M^r. T H R A L E.

D R A R S I R,

Inverary, O^c. 23, 1773.

WE have gotten at last out of the Hebrides. Some account of our travels I have sent to my mistress; and have inclosed an ode which I wrote in the isle of Skie.

Yesterday we landed, and to-day came hither. We purpose to visit Auchenleck, the seat of Mr. Boswell's father, then to pass a day at Glasgow, and return to Edinburgh.

About ten miles of this day's journey were uncommonly amusing. We travelled with very little light, in a storm of wind and rain; we passed about fifty-five streams that crossed our way, and fell into a river that, for a very great part of our road, foamed and roared beside us; all the rougher powers of nature, except thunder, were in motion, but there was no danger. I should have been
sorry

sorry to have missed any of the inconveniencies, to have had more light or less rain, for their co-operation crowded the scene and filled the mind.

I beg, however, to hear from you, and from my mistress. I have seen nothing that drives you from my thoughts, but continue in rain and sunshine, by night and day, dear Sir,

Your, &c.



O D E

Inclosed in the preceding Letter.

PERMEO terras, ubi nuda rupes
Saxeas miscet nebulis ruinas,
Torva ubi rident steriles coloni
Rura labores.

Pervagor gentes hominum ferorum,
Vita ubi nullo decorata cultu
Squallet informis, tugurîque fumis
Foeda latefcit.

Inter erroris salebrofa longi,
Inter ignotæ strepitus loquelæ,
Quot modis mecum, quid agat, requiro,
Thralia dulcis.

Seu viri curas, pia nupta, mulcet,
Seu foveat mater sobolem benigna,
Sive cum libris novitate pascit.
Sedula mentem;

Sit

Sit memor nostri, fideique merces
 Stet fides constans, meritoque blandum
 Thaliae discant resonare nomen
 Littora Skiae.

Scriptum in Skiâ, Sept. 6.

The following elegant Translation of this ODE was written by the learned Miss KNIGHT, and presented by her to the Editor of these Letters, who is happy in an opportunity of giving this small Specimen of her very extensive Attainments and Abilities.

O’ER stony lands, where naked rocks,
 The marks of nature’s fearful shocks
 In misty clouds appear;
 Through dismal fields, whose barren soil
 Derides the swain’s laborious toil,
 My wand’ring steps I bear.

Through nations wild, a hardy race,
 Where life no cultivated grace,
 No elegance can know;
 But shrinks abash’d from human eyes,
 And in the smoaky hovel lies;
 Through scenes like these I go.

Amidst unknown and barb’rous speech,
 While wand’ring o’er this distant beach,
 In all my wat’ry way;
 How think’st thou of thy absent friend?
 How dost thou? whither dost thou tend?
 My gentle Thralia say.

If,

If, pious wife, thy husband's cares
 Thou softly sooth; or infant heirs,
 Watch o'er as mother kind:
 Or, 'mid the charms of letter'd lore,
 Thou add new treasures to thy store,
 And feed thy active mind;

Remember me, thy friendship guard,
 Of constant friendship due reward;
 Howe'er on distant ground;
 Ah! let thy faith be still the same,
 And justly Thralia's pleasing name
 Shall Skia's shores resound.



L E T T E R LXXXVI.

TO MR. THRALE.

DEAR SIR,

Inverary, Oct. 26, 1773.

THE Duke kept us yesterday, or we should have gone forward. Inverary is a stately place. We are now going to Edinburgh by Lochlomond, Glasgow, and Auchenleck.

I wrote to you from Mull, to send for Mr. Levett or Mrs. Williams, and let them have ten pounds, if it was wanted. I find that the passage of these insular letters is not very certain, and therefore think it necessary now to write again.

I do not limit them to ten pounds; be pleased to let them have what is necessary.

I have now not heard from London for more than two months; surely I shall have many letters in

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K

Edinburgh

Edinburgh. I hope my dear mistress is well,
with all her tribe.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R LXXXVII.

To MRS. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Glasgow, Oct. 28, 1773.

I H A V E been in this place about two hours. On Monday, 25th, we dined with the Duke and Dutchess of Argyle, and the Duke lent me a horse for my next day's journey.

26th, We travelled along a deep valley between lofty mountains, covered only with barren heath; entertained with a succession of cataracts on the left hand, and a roaring torrent on the right. The Duke's horse went well; the road was good; and the journey pleasant; except that we were incommoded by perpetual rain. In all September we had, according to Boswell's register, only one day and a half of fair weather; and October perhaps not more. At night we came to the house of Sir James Cohune, who lives upon the banks of Lochlomond; of which the Scotch boast, and boast with reason.

27th, We took a boat to rove upon the lake, which is in length twenty-four miles, in breadth from perhaps two miles to half a mile. It has about thirty islands, of which twenty belong to Sir James. Young Cohune went into the boat with us, but a little agitation of the water frightened

ted him to shore. We passed up and down, and landed upon one small island, on which are the ruins of a castle; and upon another much larger, which serves Sir James for a park, and is remarkable for a large wood of eugh trees.

We then returned, very wet, to dinner, and Sir James lent us his coach to Mr Smollet's, a relation of Dr. Smollet, for whom he has erected a monumental column on the banks of the Levan, a river which issues from the Loch. This was his native place. I was desired to revise the inscription.

When I was upon the deer island, I gave the keeper who attended me a shilling, and he said it was too much. Boswell afterwards offered him another, and he excused himself from taking it, because he had been rewarded already.

This day I came hither, and go to Auchenleck on Monday.

I am, &c.

—•••••
L E T T E R LXXXVIII.

MRS. THRALE to DR. JOHNSON.

IN spite of difficulties, distance and a long *et cetera*, I will venture this one letter to Edinburgh. —But I have not written Dear Sir at the top, and so I shall be scolded for the beginning—whereas if Dear Sir comes in at all, what can it signify where? Our children are all happily got through the measles; and little Susan best of all, for whom I was most afraid.

K 2

I have

I have made my presents. * * * * received his with tears of acknowledgment; and t'other man looked out the finest words he could find; but they meant attachment and gratitude.

We talk of nothing but Italy. My master says, you will not have done us all the good you can, unless you go with him to Rome, and point his curiosity to proper objects. He will not die without seeing that capital he swears.

The Queen is said to be in danger; God preserve her for every reason. She has no disorder but mine—and if *that* should be fatal!

Mylne shone away o' Tuesday. He says you go on the wrong side of Scotland to see Wood; you must return by the other coast. Oh! cried Master, you may all trust Boswell—he'll shew his country off to the best advantage. We had a world of friends yesterday; and all talked of you; and all talked well—Burke best. Mr. Thrale would not be *silent then*; he even battled for attention; but 'tis his favourite subject.

Every body is sorry for poor Lord Lyttelton.—'Tis dreadful to die of wounds made by our own children. R——, the surgeon, is just now expired of the same disease. Dear M—— came to us to forget it; I believe there was much confidence between them. Mr. M—— was robbed, going home two nights ago, and had a comical conversation with the highwayman, about behaving like a gentleman. He paid four guineas for it.

Your last letter was charming. It tells me about the place; but I want to hear of the *hard inhabitant*. Mean time I have seen little, except the man that saw the mouse. He seems very ill, and very wild; I fancy *he* wants a governess; *your* merits, as usual, were talked of; and he made choice of your *health* as the subject of his eulogium.

Betsy

Betsy C—— would do well enough, if her husband, whom you call Hoggarel, did not take away her money as fast as she got it.

We have had a great thunder storm. It has even split the obelisk in St. George's Fields; no exaggeration in this; you may see the crack when you come home.

Dr. Beattie is as charming as ever; and I like his lady extremely.—Very pretty, very pleasing she is. Every body rejoices that the Doctor will get his pension; every one loves him but Goldsmith, who says he cannot bear the sight of so much applause as we all bestow upon him. Did he not tell us so himself, who could believe he was so amazingly ill-natured?

* * * * and her husband set out very prettily, and will, I hope, stick to the city. Lothbury, as you say.—How in the world came you to think of Lothbury?

The opposition folks tell us, 'tis no joke to despise the Americans *now*; but our master says, that their rejoicing is only just as my little children rejoiced yesterday, and danced about for delight, because Jack the idle boy refused to obey the gardener, and said he should grow big enough in a year to beat him. So here's modern politicks in a letter from me; yes, and a touch of the *Punick war* too; for Mr. * * * * desired to consult with me, forsooth, instead of my husband, about his private affairs; and said how A—— and S—— had demanded their money, but he thought it imprudent to pay them *just now*, as cash ran low. Why that, Sir, said I, is the very reason you *should* pay them; and thereupon did I tell him how the old Romans were besieged by Brennus till famine had encouraged him to hope for their giving up on any terms, and how, to take all such hope away, they threw their last loaves over the wall,

wall, with an air, and made him believe they had bread enough within. And now, thinks I, Mr. Johnson says that history never is good to illustrate common life; but I say,

When house and land are gone and spent,
Then learning is most excellent.

I see you are happy,——that is, diverted; and I am very desirous to help to divert you. But I am far from happy; my mother is dead; my Lucy sick; my uncle ill; and myself tied up from attending him by *heavy* duties and sorrows at home. Yet you fret because of deafness; any man might catch cold in his ear, I suppose, doing what you do, and change of air and climate and all. I wish I *was* deaf to many things I am forced to hear, that are very disagreeable. What ails dear Lucy I cannot guess, but *her* ear is affected sure enough, and she goes about with her head on one side.

Well! 'tis better talk of Iceland. Gregory challenges you for an Iceland expedition; but I trust there is no need; I suppose good eyes might reach it from some of the places you have been in.

Adieu, dear Sir, all our afflictions make us turn our heads towards you—and *you* will come back to us; but I daily miss more and more another dear, dear friend—who never will come back to

Your, &c.

LETTER LXXXIX.

MRS. THRALE, to DR. JOHNSON.

DEAR SIR, Streatham, Thursday, Oct. 7, 1773.

I KNOW not how sufficiently to thank you for your descriptive letters; and though you will not see this for a long time, I am desirous to return my true acknowledgments for the trouble you have given yourself to gratify my curiosity. When the scenes are shifted, and you return to Edinburgh, what I am now writing will serve to recal those images with which you were impressed when you wrote to me; and one pleasure of correspondence arises from the recollection of those accidents to which one's friend's letter is a reply.

The professor of physick at Aberdeen seems to have obtained (and justly) much of your kindness; but when a wench in a clean linen gown can attract attention from novelty, the region must indeed be remote, and the place savage enough; you are though little nearer to London I believe than you would be among the mountains of Savoy.

I think mighty well of your discretion in not scrambling up every rock; there is little to be gained, except a sprained ankle, by climbing heights, in a country which affords no prospects; but the general hardship of your journey disturbs me; only now and then, when I think on the possibility of illness. Fatigue is profitable to your health upon the whole, and keeps fancy from playing foolish tricks. Exercise for your body and exertion for your mind will contribute more than all the medicine in the universe to preserve that life we all consider as invaluable; and this journey may do more good than at first was hoped for.

When

When you fight for an island of your own, remember that Rastelas could never settle the limits of his imaginary dominion, but when I am grown rich, we will buy Bardsey for you; perhaps a fight of Wales in the mean time may not be amiss. 'Tis long since I saw my own country, but there are untrodden paths in it which may perhaps be as curious as any in Scotland. Barefooted girls too in plenty as I remember, to whom Cocker's arithmetick may be entertaining as a subject of speculation, but useless enough, for there is little money to count.

A-propos to money matters, G—— confesses bankruptcy, and we shall lose two thousand pounds, which will not contribute to accelerate our purchase of Bardsey; Mr. Thrall is very merciful to him however. You may extol your savage chieftains how you will, and praise feudal times and feudal notions, but true liberality will not be found where commerce, the humanizer of hearts, is a stranger. Gothic and barbarous rulers will rarely be inhospitable to those who seek, or cruel to those who rely upon them; as the lion is said to refuse tearing in pieces the wretch who lies down inadvertent to sleep in his den; but 'tis from the dog and elephant that we expect generosity; their companionship with man, and elevation through his favour, the one in European, the other in Asiatick life, gives them a tenderness for distress which the king of beasts can never feel. The London merchant, on some such principle perhaps, is compassionate to poverty, and charitable to want; his own familiarity with money too takes off from his respect for it. He knows that

—— 'Twas mine, 'tis his,
And may be slave to thousands;

while

while the unfrequency of such objects as two thousand pounds in a heap would make a true baron of an aristocratick state miserably afraid to part with it,—and perfectly steel his heart against the man who should wrong him of what he esteems so highly.

Our old friend B——, by the way, has found a vein of lead ore on his estate, and I feel very glad to hear it somehow. You use to hate that poor fellow, because he could not wait for his dinner till four o'clock, but he may have it now to a minute, and I doubt not but the wild fowl will be done to a turn. No one so nice about the eating science and ceremony as a bachelor bred in London and retired to the country, about sixty years old, having passed his youth in business, and the hopes of an elegant dish or two after counting house was shut; the disappointment he then suffered from his wife's thinking more of Mrs. Pritchard's acting than her own account book, shall be all remedied, now that he has to chuse his retreat in a grazing country, for plenty's sake, with the sea about seven miles off, and a fine trout stream running through his grounds;—his wife dead, and his sons carrying on the business, while he and the old housekeeper ring the changes on every dish, and the dressing of it, till invention fail.

Will you never be tired of that * * * * ? I wish he would live in the south, where he is liked exceedingly. We danced together once at Brighthelmstone I remember; his manners were eminently pleasing there, and his performance much applauded.

Harry's life is put in the lease; may he hold it as my father's mother did, for seventy-three years!

What a letter is this! but you would be angry were it shorter. I work hard at the carpet; and teach

teach the children. You have no great reverence I know for either of those employments ; but then you have no reverence for any employment except the noblest ; and who can pass their whole life in that ? The gloomy reflections made on your birthday are a proof that the best men never please themselves, and the bad never please any *but* themselves. I know your horror of presumption, and your idea that the fearing Christian is most in the favour of Heaven ; but recollect that Honest and Hopeful got over the river better than Christian and Muchafraid in the Pilgrim's Progress ; and our children say, they don't perceive that the others were better received when they had crossed the river.

Be merry and cheerful, Dear Sir, and see fights, and tell tales, and continue to love our master, and his brats, and

Your ever faithful,

H. L. THRALE.

Learn of me to be happy.—*You know* the reasons I have to be otherwise ;—yet I don't grumble,—do I ?

L E T-

L E T T E R XC.

TO MRS. T H R A L E.

HONOURED MISTRESS, Auchencleck, Nov. 3, 1773.

AT Glasgow I received fix letters, of which the first was written August 23d. I am now at leisure to answer them in order.

August 23d. Mrs. B—— has the mien and manners of a gentlewoman; and such a person and mind as would not be in any place either admired or contemned. She is in a proper degree inferior to her husband: she cannot rival him; nor can he ever be ashamed of her.

Little Miss, when I left her, was like any other Miss of seven months. I believe she is thought pretty; and her father and mother have a mind to think her wise.

Your letter brought us the first certain intelligence of Dr. Beattie's pension. He will now be a great man at Aberdeen, where every one speaks well of him.

August 25th. I am obliged to dear Queeney for her letter, and am sorry that I have not been able to collect more for her cabinet, but I shall bring her something.

What should * * * and his wife do at the wrong end of the town, whither they can carry nothing that will not raise contempt, and from which they can bring nothing that will not excite aversion. He is not to be either wit or statesman; his genius, if he follow his direction, will bid him live in Lothbury, and measure brandy.

Sept. 8th. I first saw the account of Lord Littleton's death in the isle of Raarfa, and suspected that it had been hastened by the vexation which his

his son has given him. We shall now see what the young man will do, when he is left to himself.

I am at a loss what to judge of Sir * * * *. To doubt whether six thousand pounds have or have not been paid, as was directed, is absurd and childish; he to whom they were due can answer the question; and he by whom they were remitted can confirm or confute the answer. You should surely write to Mr. B——.

Of Sir * * * * you had not left me any high notions; but I supposed him to be at least commercially honest, and incapable of eluding his own bond by fraudulent practices, yet I think Mr. T——'s suspicion not to be slighted. Principles can only be strong by the strength of understanding, or the cogency of religion.

I do not see how you can much offend by putting Harry's life into the lease, it puts no life out, and therefore does not lessen Sir * * * *'s interest. I believe, however, you may depend better for peace upon the indifference of his indolence, than the approbation of his judgment. I think it should not be neglected.

Sept. 14th. I take great delight in your fifteen thousand trees; the greater, for having been so long in a country where trees and diamonds are equal rarities.

Poor V——! There are not so many many reasons as he thinks why he should envy me, but there are some; he wants what I have, a kind and careful mistress; and wants likewise what I shall want at my return. He is a good man; and, when his mind is composed, a man of parts.

Sept. 28th. When I wrote an account of my intention to return, I little thought that I should be so long the plaything of the wind. Of the various accidents of our voyage I have been careful
to

to give you an account, and hope you have received it. My deafness went away by degrees. Miss Macleod made me a great flannel night-cap, which perhaps helped to set me right.

If Sir * * * * goes to Bath, it may deserve consideration whether you should not follow him. If you go, take two footmen, and dress in such a manner as he may be proud to see. The money that you stake is no great venture, nor will the want of it be felt, whether you gain or lose the purpose of your journey.

My poor little Lucy is, I hope, now quite recovered; for I have brought no little maiden from the Highlands, though I might perhaps have had one of the princesses of Raarfa, who are very pretty people, and in that wilderness of life put me in mind of your little tribe, by the propriety of their behaviour.

Oct. 7th. This is the last letter. I have done thinking of * * * * whom we now call Sir Sawney; he has disgusted all mankind by injudicious parsimony, and given occasion to so many stories, that * * * * has some thoughts of collecting them, and making a novel of his life. Scrambling I have not willingly left off; the power of scrambling has left me; I have however been forced to exert it on many occasions. I am, I thank God, better than I was. I am grown very much superior to wind and rain; and am too well acquainted both with mire and with rocks, to be afraid of a Welch journey. I had rather have Bardley than Macleod's island, though I am told much of the beauty of my new property, which the storms did not suffer me to visit. Boswell will praise my resolution and perseverance; and I shall in return celebrate his good humour and perpetual cheerfulness. He has better faculties than I had imagined; more justness of discernment; and more fecundity of images.

images. It is very convenient to travel with him, for there is no house where he is not received with kindness and respect.

I wish B—— success in his new mine, and hope that the vein will be as rich as his wants prompt him to wish it. I congratulate you likewise on the rising reputation of the brewery; and hope that the sweets of doing right will so much engage us, that we shall never more allow ourselves to do wrong. Forty shillings is a frightful price for malt, but we must brew on, and brew well, and hold out to better times.

Thus, dear Madam, I have answered your six letters, in part too late to be of any use. The regard which you are pleased to express, and the kindness which you always show, I do not pretend to return otherwise than by warm wishes for your happiness.

I will now continue my narrative.

Oct. 29th, was spent in surveying the city and college of Glasgow. I was not much pleased with any of the professors. The town is opulent and handsome.

30th, We dined with the Earl of Loudon, and saw his mother the Countess; who, at ninety-three, has all her faculties, helps at table, and exerts all the powers of conversation that she ever had. Though not tall, she stoops very much. She had lately a daughter, Lady Betty, whom, at seventy, she used to send after supper early to bed, for girls must not use late hours, while she sat up to entertain the company.

31st, Sunday, we passed at Mr. Campbell's, who married Mr. Boswell's sister.

Nov. 1st, We paid a visit to the Countess of Eglington, a lady who for many years gave the laws

laws of elegance to Scotland. She is in full vigour of mind, and not much impaired in form. She is only eighty-three. She was remarking that her marriage was in the year eight; and I told her my birth was in nine. Then, says she, I am just old enough to be your mother, and I will take you for my son. She called Boswell the boy; yes, Madam, said I, we will send him to school. He is already, said she, in a good school; and expressed her hope of his improvement. At last night came, and I was sorry to leave her.

2d, We came to Auchenleck. The house is like other houses in this country built of stone, scarcely yet finished, but very magnificent and very convenient. We purpose to stay here some days; more or fewer as we are used. I shall find no kindness such as will suppress my desire of returning home.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R XCI.

To MRS. THRALE.

DEAREST MADAM,

Edinburgh, Nov. 12, 1773.

AMONG the possibilities of evil which my imagination suggested at this distance, I missed that which has really happened. I never had much hope of a will in your favour, but was willing to believe that no will would have been made. The event is now irrevocable; it remains only to bear it. Not to wish it had been different

ent is impossible; but as the wish is painful without use, it is not prudent, perhaps not lawful, to indulge it. As life, and vigour of mind, and sprightliness of imagination, and flexibility of attention, are given us for valuable and useful purposes, we must not think ourselves at liberty to squander life, to enervate intellectual strength, to cloud our thoughts, or fix our attention, when by all this expence we know that no good can be produced. Be alone as little as you can; when you are alone, do not suffer your thoughts to dwell on what you might have done, to prevent this disappointment. You perhaps could not have done what you imagine, or might have done it without effect. But even to think in the most reasonable manner, is for the present not so useful as not to think. Remit yourself solemnly into the hands of God, and then turn your mind upon the business and amusements which lie before you. "All is best," says Chene, as it has been, "excepting the errors of our own free will." Burton concludes his long book upon melancholy with this important precept, "Be not solitary; be not idle." Remember Chene's position and observe Burton's precept.

We came hither on the ninth of this month. I long to come under your care, but for some days cannot decently get away. They congratulate our return as if we had been with Phipps or Banks; I am ashamed of their salutations.

I have been able to collect very little for Quenney's cabinet; but she will not want toys now; she is so well employed. I wish her success; and am not without some thought of becoming her school-fellow. I have got an Italian Rasseles.

Surely my dear Lucy will recover; I wish I could do her good. I love her very much; and
should

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 143

should love another godchild, if I might have the honour of standing to the next baby.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R ACII.

MRS. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

DEAR SIR,

Nov. 20, 1773.

WHEN things are so very bad, as they are now with me, the best comforters are those who acknowledge them to be very bad. Your last letter says, very properly, that among all the possibilities of evil which your imagination could suggest, losing my uncle's estate was the most unlikely. Had you known his excessive tenderness for me when a girl, the surprise would not have been lessened.—You *do* know that I married, to please him, a man of his own choice, and deserving of every body's esteem;—indeed possessing it. You know I have scarce seen him since; and certainly never disoblige him: and you know he had no other relation, except at a very great distance. You now know he has willed away his estate. I should think on this sorrow more, however, had I not other sorrows, perhaps providentially sent to hold my heart fixed on my husband and his concerns. Lucy's unaccountable illness; my own present situation, having brought a second son, who appears to have suffered something, though I know not what, from my late accumulation of misery;—and Mr. Thrale's health,

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L

which

which has been shook by these confusions as well as my own, occupy all the thoughts I have in the world; and you can scarce believe how full my mind is, without a word of my uncle. Our generous master is not angry at *that* disappointment, though he has a right to be sorry; for he doubtless married me with hopes and promises of the Hertfordshire estate.

We will do as well as we can; and hope for comfort from you at your return; mean time, depend upon my not giving Mr. Thrale additional pain by my dejection: I will try to be cheerful, though I am not happy; and to be merry, though I do not even *beguile myself*, as Desdemona says, —to fancy I shall ever more be unaffectedly so. I will learn to be as gaily miserable, and as airily discontented as I can; and hope that no one who is left me shall be made unhappy by the vexations which gnaw the heart of;

Your faithful servant.

I cannot say with Shylock, *no sighs but of my breathing, no tears but of my shedding*, however. Here is * * * * * just come in, whose sufferings from the bankruptcy of * * * * * have been attended with terrible consequences indeed, and twenty years added to his looks at least; yet neither he nor I would change, except in a peevish moment I suppose, with an Hebridian laird. —Fools if we would! when all has been taken from us (and we have yet much left) we are surely better off than they. I read him a passage or two of your letter, dated Sept. 30th, and made that my comment. He was fullen enough, poor fellow, but as the rake in *Clarissa* says, when he had talked nonsense for half an hour to a man made desperate

rate by grief,——'Twas so that I comforted and advised him.

Farewel, the postscript is longer than the letter, let's end it.

This will meet you in London, where I hope all will be found pretty well.



L E T T E R XCIII.

To MRS. THRALE.

MY DEAREST MISTRESS, Edinburgh, Nov. 18, 1773.

THIS is the last letter that I shall write; while you are reading it, I shall be coming home.

I congratulate you upon your boy; but you must not think that I will love him all at once as well as I love Harry, for Harry you know is so rational. I shall love by degrees.

Poor, pretty, dear Lucy! Can nothing do her good? I am sorry to lose her. But if she must be taken from us, let us resign her with confidence into the hands of Him who knows, and who only knows, what is best both for us and her.

Do not suffer yourself to be dejected. Resolution and diligence will supply all that is wanting, and all that is lost. But if your health should be impaired, I know not where to find a substitute. I shall have no mistress; Mr. Thrale will have no wife; and the little flock will have no mother.

I long to be home, and have taken a place in the coach for Monday; I hope therefore to be in London on Friday the 26th, in the evening. Please to let Mrs. Williams know.

I am, &c.

LETTER XCIV.

To Mrs. THRALE.

MADAM,

March 11, 1773.

OUR master is a good man, and contrives well for me. I have now a reason for doing on Monday what I might have been persuaded against my will to have delayed till Tuesday. I hope on Monday to be your slave in the morning, and Mrs. Smith's in the evening, and then fall again to my true mistress, and be the rest of the week,

MADAM,

Your most obedient.

LETTER XCV.

To Mrs. THRALE.

MADAM,

Tuesday.

MASTER is very kind in being very angry; but he may spare his anger this time. I have done exactly as Dr. Lawrence ordered, and am much better at the expence of about thirty-six ounces of blood. Nothing in the world! For a good cause I have six-and-thirty more, I long though to come to Streatham, and you shall give me no solid flesh for a week; and I am to take
phyfic.

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physic. And hey boys, up go we. I was in bed all last night, only a little sitting up. The box goes to *Calcutta*. I am,

Dearest, dearest Madam,

Your, &c.

Let me come to you to-morrow.



L E T T E R X C V I .

T O M R . T H R A L E .

DEAR SIR,

June 2, 1775.

I HAVE taken the liberty of enclosing a letter, which contains a request of which I cannot know the propriety. Nothing, I suppose, can be done till the present master of the tap * has given notice of his resignation; and whether even then it is fit for you to recommend, there may be reason to doubt. I shall tell Heely, that I have laid his letter before you, and that he must inform you when he is certain of the intended resignation. You will then act as you judge best. There seems to be nothing unreasonable in Heely's desire. He seems to have a genius for an alehouse, and if he can get this establishment, may thank his friend that sent him to the Marshalsea.

This, I know, is a happy week; you will revel with your constituents in plenty and merriment;

* At Ranelagh-house.

ment; I must be kept at home by my wicked mistress, out of the way of so much happiness. You shall however have my good wishes. I hope every man will go from your table more a friend than he came.

I am, &c.



L E T T E R XCVII.

To MRS. T H R A L E.

M A D A M,

February 3, 1775.

SO many demands are made upon me, that if you give leave I will stay here till Tuesday. My pamphlet has not gone on at all. Please to send by the bearer the papers on my table; and give my love to my *brother* and *sisters*.

I am, &c.



L E T T E R XCVIII.

To MRS. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

University College, March 3, 1775.

I AM afraid that something has happened to occupy your mind disagreeably, and hinder you from writing to me, or thinking about me.

The fate of my proposal for our friend Mr. Carter will be decided on Monday. Those
whom

whom I have spoken to are all friends. I have not abated any part of the entrance or payment, for it has not been thought too much, and I hope he will have scholars.

I am very deaf; and yet cannot well help being much in company, though it is often very uncomfortable. But when I have done this thing, which I hope is a good thing, or find that I cannot do it, I wish to live a while under your care and protection.

The imperfection of our post makes it uncertain whether we shall receive letters, sooner than we must send them; this is therefore written while I yet do not know whether you have favoured me or no. I was sufficiently discontented that I heard nothing yesterday. But sure all is well. I am, dearest Madam,

Your, &c.



LETTER XCIX.

TO MRS. THRALE.

MADAM,

April 1, 1775.

I HAD mistaken the day on which I was to dine with Mr. Bruce, and hear of Abissinia, and therefore am to dine this day with Mr. Hamilton.

The news from Oxford is, that no tennis-court can be hired at any price; and that the Vice-Chancellor will not write to the Clarendon trustees without some previous intimation that his request will not be unacceptable. We must therefore

fore find some way of applying to Lord Mansfield, who with the Archbishop of York and the Bishop of Chester holds the trust. Thus are we thrown to a vexatious distance. Poor * * *! do not tell him.

The other Oxford news is, that they have sent me a degree of Doctor of Laws, with such praises in the diploma as, perhaps, ought to make me ashamed; they are very like your praises. I wonder whether I shall ever shew them to you.

Boswell will be with you. Please to ask Murphy the way to Lord Mansfield. Dr. Wetherell, who is now here, and will be here for some days, is very desirous of seeing the brewhouse; I hope Mr. Thrale will send him an invitation. He does what he can for Carter.

To-day I dine with Hamilton; to-morrow with Hoole; on Monday with Paradise; on Tuesday with master and mistress; on Wednesday with Dilly; but come back to the Tower*.

* Sic nunquam rediturus labitur annus.

I am, &c.

Poor Mrs. Williams is very bad, worse than I ever saw her.

* The Tower was a separate room at Streatham, where Dr. Johnson slept.

LETTER C.

To Mrs. THRALE.

May 12, 1775.

AND so, my dearest Mistress, you lie a bed hatching suspicions. I did not mean to reproach you, nor meant any thing but respect, and impatience to know how you did.

I wish I could say or send any thing to divert you; but I have done nothing and seen nothing. I dined one day with Paoli, and yesterday with Mrs. Southwells, and called on Congreve. Mr. Twiss, hearing that you talked of despoiling his book of the fine print, has sent you a copy to frame. He is going to Ireland, and I have given him letters to Dr. Leland and Mr. Falkner.

Mr. M—— is so ill that the Lady is not visible; but yesterday I had I know not how much kiss of Mrs. Abington, and very good looks from Miss * * * * * the maid of honour.

Boswell has made me promise not to go to Oxford till he leaves London; I had no great reason for haste, and therefore might as well gratify a friend. I am always proud and pleased to have my company desired. Boswell would have thought my absence a loss, and I know not who else would have considered my presence as profit. He has entered himself at the Temple, and I joined in his bond. He is to plead before the Lords, and hopes very nearly to gain the cost of his journey. He lives much with his friend Paoli who says, a man must see Wales to enjoy England.

The book which is now most read, but which, as far as I have gone, is but dull, is Gray's letters,
pre-

prefixed by Mr. Mafon to his poems. I have borrowed mine, and therefore cannot lend it, and I can hardly commend the purchase.

I have offended; and, what is stranger, have justly offended the nation of Rasay. If they could come hither, they would be as fierce as the Americans. Rasay has written to Boswell an account of the injury done him, by representing his house as subordinate to that of Dunvegan. Boswell has his letter, and I believe copied my answer. I have appeased him, if a degraded chief can possibly be appeased; but it will be thirteen days, days of resentment and discontent, before my recantation can reach him. Many a dirk will imagination, during that interval, fix in my heart. I really question if at this time my life would not be in danger, if distance did not secure it.

Boswell will find his way to Streatham before he goes, and will detail this great affair. I would have come on Saturday, but that I am engaged to do Dr. Lawrence a little service on Sunday. Which day shall I come next week? I hope you will be well enough to see me often. I am, dearest Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T-

LETTER CI.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

May 20, 1775.

I WILL try not to be sullen, and yet when I leave you how shall I help it. Bos. goes away on Monday; I go in a day or two after him, and will try to be well, and to be as you would have me. But I hope that when I come back you will teach me the value of liberty.

Nurse tells me that you are all well, and she hopes all growing better. Ralph, like other young gentlemen, will travel for improvement.

I have sent you six guineas and an half; so you may laugh at neglect and parsimony. It is a fine thing to have money. Peyton and Macbean* are both starving, and I cannot keep them.

Must we mourn for the Queen of Denmark? How shall I do for my black cloaths which you have in the chest?

Make my compliments to every body.

I am, &c.

I dined in a large company at a dissenting book-seller's yesterday, and disputed against toleration with one Doctor Meyer.

* Peyton and Macbean were amanuenses of Dr. Johnson. Macbean was a man of great learning, with little power of bringing it into play.—He had read before he died the Hebrew Bible eleven times over. Peyton knew many modern languages, but was kept from rising in the world by domestic miseries.

L E T.

LETTER CII.

To MRS. THRALE.

DEAREST LADY,

May 22, 1775.

ONE thing or other still hinders me, besides what is perhaps the great hindrance, that I have no great mind to go. Boswell went away at two this morning. L—— I suppose goes this week. B—— got two-and-forty guineas in fees while he was here. He has, by his wife's persuasion and mine, taken down a present for his mother-in-law.

Pray let me know how the breath does. I hope there is no lasting evil to be feared. Take great care of yourself. Why did you take cold? Did you pump into your shoes?

I am not sorry that you read Boswell's journal. Is it not a merry piece? There is much in it about poor me. Miss, I hear, mentions me sometimes in *her* memoirs.

I shall try at Oxford what can be done for * * * * *. What can be done for his daughter it is not easy to tell. Does her mother know her own distress, or is she out of her wits with pride, or does * * * a little exaggerate? It is strange behaviour.

The mourning it seems is general. I must desire that you will let somebody take my best black cloaths out of the chest, and send them. There is nothing in the chest but what may be tumbled. The key is the newest of those two that have the wards channelled. When they are at the Borough, my man can fetch them.

But all this while, dear and dear lady, take great care of yourself.

Do

Do not buy C——'s travels, they are duller than T——'s. W——is too fond of words, but you may read him. I shall take care that Adair's account of America may be sent you, for I shall have it of my own.

Beattie has called once to see me. He lives grand at the Archbishop's.

Dear lady, do not be careless, nor heedless, nor rash, nor giddy; but take care of your health. I am, dearest Madam,

Your, &c.

Dr. Talbot, which I think I never told you, has given five hundred pounds to the future infirmary.



LETTER CIII.

TO MRS. THRALE:

DEAREST LADY,

May 25, 1775.

THE fit was a sudden faintness, such as I have had I know not how often; no harm came of it, and all is well. I cannot go till Saturday; and then go I will, if I can. My cloaths, Mr. Thrale says, must be made like other people's, and they are gone to the taylor. If I do not go, you know how shall I come back again?

I told you, I fancy, yesterday, that I was well, but I thought so little of the disorder, that I know not whether I said any thing about it.

I am, &c.

LET-

L E T T E R C I V :

T O M R S . T H R A L E .

D E A R M A D A M ,

J u n e 1 , 1 7 7 5 .

I K N O W well enough what you think, but I am out of your reach. I did not make the epitaph before last night and this morning ; I have found it too long. I send you it as it is to pacify you, and will make it shorter. It is too long by near half. Tell me what you would be most willing to spare.

Dr. Wetherell went with me to the Vice Chancellor, to whom we told the transaction with my Lord of Chester, and the Vice Chancellor promised to write to the Archbishop. I told him that he needed have no scruples; he was asking nothing for himself; nothing that would make him richer, or them poorer; and that he acted only as a magistrate, and one concerned for the interest of the University. Dr. Wetherell promises to stimulate him.

Don't suppose that I live here as we live at Streat-ham. I went this morning to the chapel at six, and if I was to stay would try to conform to all wholesome rules. Pray let Harry have the penny which I owe him for the last morning.

Mr. Colson is well; and still willing to keep me, but I delight not in being long here. Mr. Smollet of Lochlomond and his Lady have been here. We were very glad to meet.

Pray let me know how you do, and play no more tricks; if you do, I can yet come back and watch you.

I am, &c.

L E T .

LETTER CV.

TO MR. THRALE.

DEAR SIR,

I BEG that you will be pleased to send me an attestation to Mr. Carter's merit. I am going to-morrow; and shall leave the pamphlet* to shift for itself.

You need only say, that you have sufficient knowledge of Mr. Carter to testify that he is eminently skilful in the art which he professes; and that he is a man of such decency and regularity of manners; that there will be no danger from his example to the youth of the colleges; and that therefore you shall consider it as a favour if leave may be obtained for him to profess horsemanship in the University.

I am, &c.

Please to free this letter to Miss Lucy Porter in Lichfield.

Taxation no Tyranny.

LET.

L E T T E R C V I I .

T O M R S . T H R A L E .

M A D A M E ,

J u n e 5 , 1 7 7 5 .

TR O I S jours sont passés sans que je reçoive une lettre ; point de nouvelles, point d'amitié, point de querelles. Un silence si rare, que veut-il ? je vous ai envoyé l'épithaphe, trop longue à la vérité, mais on la raccourcira sans beaucoup de peine. Vous n'en avez pas dit un mot. Peut-être que je serai plus heureux ce soir.

J'ai épuisé ce lieu, où je n'étudie pas, et on si on ôte l'étude, il n'y a rien, et je ne trouve guère moyen d'échapper. Les voitures qui passent par cy, passent dans la nuit ; les chaises de poste me coûteront beaucoup. J'envoie querir un passage plus commode.

Je dînerai demain chez le Vice Chancelier, j'espère de trouver des choses un peu favorables à notre ami infortuné, mais je n'ai nulle confiance. Je suis,

M A D A M E ,

V otre très obéissant serviteur.

L E T -

LETTER CVIII.

TO MRS. THRALE.

MADAM,

June 6, 1775.

SUCH is the uncertainty of all human things, that Mr. C—— has quarrelled with me. He says, I raise the laugh upon him, and he is an independent man, and all he has is his own; and he is not used to such things. And so I shall have no more good of C——, of whom I never had any good but flattery, which my dear mistress knows I can have at home.

That I had no letters yesterday I do not wonder; for yesterday we had no post. I hope something will come to-day. Our post is so ill-regulated that we cannot receive letters and answer them the same day.

Here I am, and how to get away I do not see; for the power of departure otherwise than in a post-chaise depends upon accidental vacancies in passing coaches, of which all but one in a week pass through this place at three in the morning. After that one I have sent, but with little hope; yet I shall be very unwilling to stay here another week.

I supped two nights ago with Mr. Bright, who enquired after Harry and Queeney, to whom I likewise desire to be remembered.

Suppose I should grow like my mistress, and when I am to go forward, think eagerly how and when I shall come back, would that be a strange thing? Love and reverence have always had some tendency to produce conformity.

Where is Mr. Baretti? Are he and Queeney plague and darling as they are used to be? I hope

my sweet Queeney will write me a long letter, when I am so settled that she knows how to direct to me, and if I can find any thing for her cabinet, I shall be glad to bring it.

What the Vice Chancellor says respecting Mr. Carter, if he says any thing, you shall know to-morrow, for I shall probably leave him too late for this day's post.

If I have not a little something from you to-day, I shall think something very calamitous has befallen us. This is the natural effect of punctuality. Every intermission alarms. Dearest dear Lady, take care of yourself. You connect us, and rule us, and vex us, and please us. We have all a deep interest in your health and prosperity.

I am, &c.



LETTER CIX.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAREST LADY,

June 7, 1775.

YOUR letter which ought to have come on Tuesday came not till Wednesday. Well, now I know that there is no harm, I will take a chaise and march away towards my own country.

You are but a goose at last. Wilton told you, that there is room for three hundred and fifty letters, which are equivalent to twelve lines. If you reckon by lines, the inscription has seventeen: if by letters, five hundred and seventy-nine; so that one way you must expel five lines, the other two hundred

hundred and twenty-nine letters. This will perplex us; there is little that by my own choice I should like to spare; but we must comply with the stone.

C—— and I are pretty well again. I grudge the cost of going to Lichfield, Frank and I in a post-chaise; yet I think of thundering away to-morrow; so you will write your next dear letter to Lichfield.

This letter is written on Wednesday after the receipt of yours, but will not be delivered to the post till to-morrow. I wish Ralph better, and my master and his boys well. I have pretty good nights.

I am, &c.



LETTER CX.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

June 10, 1775.

ON Thursday morning I took a post-chaise, and intended to have passed a day or two at Birmingham, but Hector had company in his house, and I went on to Lichfield, where I know not yet how long I shall stay, but think of going forward to Ashbourne in a short time.

Neither your letters nor mine seem to have kept due time; if you see the date of the letter in which the epitaph was inclosed, you will find that it has been delayed. I shall adjust the epitaph some way or other. Send me your advice.

M 2

Poor

164. L E T T E R S T O A N D F R O M

Poor Miss Porter has been bad with the gout in her hand. She cannot yet dress herself.

I am glad that Ralph is gone; a new air may do him good. I hope little Miss promises well.

I will write you a longer letter on Monday, being just now called out according to an appointment which I had forgotten.

I am, &c.



L E T T E R C X I.

T O M R S. T H R A L E.

D E A R E S T L A D Y,

June 11, 1775.

I AM sorry that my master has undertaken an impracticable interest; but it will be forgotten before the next election. I suppose he was asked at some time when he could not well refuse.

Lady Smith is settled at last here, and fees company at her new house.—I went on Saturday. Poor Lucy Porter has her hand in a bag, so disabled by the gout that she cannot dress herself. She does not go out. All your other friends are well.

I go every day to Stowhill; both the sisters are now at home. I sent Mrs. Aston a *Taxation*, and sent it nobody else, and Lucy borrowed it. Mrs. Aston since that enquired by a messenger when I was expected. I can tell nothing about it, answered Lucy; when he is to be here I suppose she'll know.

Every body remembers you all. You left a good impression behind you. I hope you will do the
the

the same at * * * * *. Do not make them speeches. Unusual compliments, to which there is no stated and prescriptive answer, embarrass the feeble, who know not what to say, and disgust the wise, who knowing them to be false, suspect them to be hypocritical. Did I think when I sat down to this paper that I should write a lesson to my mistress, of whom I think with so much admiration?

As to Mr. Carter, I am inclined to think that our project will succeed. The Vice-Chancellor is really in earnest. He remarked to me how necessary it must be to provide in places of education a sufficient variety of innocent amusements, to keep the young men from pernicious pleasures.

When I did not hear from you, I thought whether it would not be proper to come back and look for you. I knew not what might have happened.

Consider the epitaph, which, you know, must be shortened, and tell what part you can best spare. Part of it, which tells the birth and marriage, is formulary, and can be expressed only one way; the character we can make longer or shorter; and since it is too long, may choose what we shall take away. You must get the dates for which you see spaces left.

You never told me, and I omitted to enquire, how you were entertained by Boswell's Journal. One would think the man had been hired to be a spy upon me. He was very diligent, and caught opportunities of writing from time to time. You may now conceive yourself tolerably well acquainted with the expedition. Folks want me to go to Italy, but I say you are not for it. However write often to, Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T.

L E T T E R CXII.

To MRS. T H R A L E.

DEAREST LADY,

Lichfield, June 13, 1775.

I NOW write at Mrs. Cobb's, where I have dined and had custard. She and Miss Adey send their compliments. Nothing considerable has happened since I wrote, only I am sorry to see Miss Porter so bad; and I am not well pleased to find that after a very comfortable intermission, the old flatulence distressed me again last night. The world is full of ups and downs, as I think I once told you before.

Lichfield is full of box-clubs. The ladies have one for their own sex. They have incorporated themselves under the appellation of the Amicable Society; and pay each twopence a week to the box. Any woman who can produce the weekly twopence is admitted to the society; and when any of the poor subscribers is in want, she has six shillings a week; and I think when she dies five pounds are given to her children. Lucy is not one, nor Mrs. Cobb. The subscribers are always quarrelling; and every now and then a lady in a fume withdraws her name; but they are an hundred pounds before hand.

Mr. Green has got a cast of Shakespeare, which he holds to be a very exact resemblance.

There is great lamentation here for the death of Coll. Lucy is of opinion that he was wonderfully handsome.

Boswell is a favourite, but he has lost ground since I told them that he is married, and all hope is over.

Be

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 167

Be so kind as to let me know when you go to Lewes, and when you come back, that I may not fret for want of a letter, as I fretted at Oxford. Pay my respects to my dear master.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R CXIII.

To MRS. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Lichfield, June 17, 1775.

WRITE to me something every post, for on the stated day my head runs upon a letter. I will answer Queeney. Bad nights came again; but I took mercury, and hope to find good effects. I am distressfully and frightfully deaf. *Querelis jam satis datum.*

So we shall have a fine house in the winter, as we already have in the summer. I am not sorry for the appearance of a little superfluous expence. I have not yet been at Ashbourne, and yet I would fain flatter myself that you begin to wish me home; but do not tell me so, if it be not true, for I am very well at Stowhill.

Mrs. Porter will be glad of a memorial from you, and will keep the work-bag carefully, but has no great use for it; her present qualifications for the niceties of needle-work being dim eyes and lame fingers.

Of the harvest about us it is said much is expected from the wheat, more indeed than can be easily remembered. The barley is promising enough, but not uncommonly exuberant. But
this

this is of itself a very good account, for no grain is ever dear, when wheat is cheap. I hope therefore that my master may without fear or danger build this year and dig the next. I do not find that in this part of the country rain has been much wanted.

If you go with Mrs. D——, do not forget me amidst the luxuries of absolute dominion, but let me have kind letters full of yourself, of your own hopes, and your own fears, and your own thoughts, and then go where you will. You will find your journey however but a barren business; it is dull to live neither scolding nor scolded, neither governing nor governed. Now try.

I expected that when the interest of the county had been divided, Mawbey would have had very little difficulty, and am glad to find that Norton opposes him with so much efficacy; pray send me the result.

I am, &c.



LETTER CXIV.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

Lichfield, June 19, 1775.

I HOPE it is true that Ralph mends, and wish you were gone to see him, that you might come back again.

Queeney revenges her long task upon Mr. Barretti's hen, who must sit on duck eggs a week longer than on her own. I hope she takes great
care

care of my hen, and the Guinea hen, and her pretty little brood.

I was afraid Mawbey would succeed, and have little hope from the scrutiny. Did you ever know a scrutiny change the account?

Miss A—— does not run after me, but I do not want her, here are other ladies.

Invenies alium, si te hic fastidit Alexis.

Miss * * * * grows old, and Miss Vyle has been ill, but I believe she came to me as soon as she got out. And I can always go to Stowhill. So never grieve about me. Only flatulencies are come again.

Your dissertation upon Queeney is very deep. I know not what to say to the chief question. Nature probably has some part in human characters, and accident has some part; which has most we will try to settle when we meet.

Small letters will undoubtedly gain room for more words, but words are useless if they cannot be read. The lines need not all be kept distinct, and some words I shall wish to leave out, though very few. It must be revised before it is engraved. I always told you that Mr. Thrale was a man, take him for all in all, you ne'er will look upon his like; but you never mind him nor me, till time forces conviction into your steely bosom. You will, perhaps, find all right about the house and the windows.

Pray always suppose that I send my respects to Master, and Queeney, and Harry, and Sufey, and Sophy.

Poor Lucy mends very slowly, but she is very good-humoured, while I do just as she would have me.

Lady Smith has got a new post-chaise, which is not nothing to talk on at Lichfield. Little things
here

here serve for conversation. Mrs. Aston's parrot pecked my leg, and I heard of it some time after at Mrs. Cobb's.

—We deal in nicer things
Than routing armies and dethroning kings.

A week ago Mrs. Cobb gave me sweetmeats to breakfast, and I heard of it last night at Stowhill.

If you are for small talk :

—Come on, and do the best you can,
I fear not you, nor yet a better man.

I could tell you about Lucy's two cats, and Brill her brother's old dog, who is gone deaf; but the day would fail me. *Suadentque cadentia sidera somnum.* So said Æneas. But I have not yet had my dinner. I have begun early, for what would become of the nation if a letter of importance should miss the post? Pray write to, dearest Madam,

Your, &c.



LETTER CXV.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

Lichfield June 21, 1775.

NOW I hope you are thinking, shall I have a letter to-day from Lichfield? Something of a letter you will have; how else can I expect that you should write? and the morning on which I should miss a letter would be a morning of uneasiness,

ness, notwithstanding all that would be said or done by the sisters of Stowhill, who do and say whatever good they can. They give me good words, and cherries, and strawberries. Lady * * * * and her mother and sister were visiting there yesterday, and Lady * * * * took her tea before her mother.

Mrs. Cobb is to come to Miss Porter's this afternoon. Miss A— comes little near me. Mr. Langley of Ashbourne was here to-day, in his way to Birmingham, and every body talks of you.

The ladies of the Amicable Society are to walk, in a few days, from the town-hall to the cathedral in procession to hear a sermon. They walk in linen gowns, and each has a stick with an acorn, but for the acorn they could give no reason, till I told them of the civick crown.

I have just had your sweet letter, and am glad that you are to be at the regatta. You know how little I love to have you left out of any shining part of life. You have every right to distinction, and should therefore be distinguished. You will see a show with philosophic superiority, and therefore may see it safely. It is easy to talk of sitting at home contented, when others are seeing or making shows. But not to have been where it is supposed, and seldom supposed falsely, that all would go if they could; to be able to say nothing when every one is talking; to have no opinion when every one is judging; to hear exclamations of rapture without power to depress; to listen to falsehoods without right to contradict, is, after all, a state of temporary inferiority, in which the mind is rather hardened by stubbornness, than supported by fortitude. If the world be worth winning, let us enjoy it; if it is to be despised, let us despise it by conviction. But the world is not to be despised but as it is compared with something better. Company is in itself better than solitude, and
pleasure

pleasure better than indolence. *Ex nihilo nihil fit*, says the moral as well as natural philosopher. By doing nothing and by knowing nothing no power of doing good can be obtained. He must mingle with the world that desires to be useful. Every new scene impresses new ideas, enriches the imagination, and enlarges the power of reason, by new topicks of comparison. You that have seen the regatta will have images which we who miss it must want, and no intellectual images are without use. But when you are in this scene of splendour and gayety, do not let one of your fits of negligence steal upon you. *Hoc age*, is the great rule whether you are serious or merry; whether you are stating the expences of your family, learning science or duty from a folio, or floating on the Thames in a fancied dress. Of the whole entertainment let me not hear so copious nor so true an account from any body as from you.

I am, dearest Madam,

Your, &c.



L E T T E R C X V I .

T O M R S . T H R A L E .

DEAR MADAM,

June 23, 1775.

SO now you have been at the regatta, for I hope you got tickets somewhere, else you wanted me, and I shall not be sorry, because you fancy you can do so well without me; but however I hope

hope you got tickets, and were dressed fine and fanciful, and made a fine part of the fine show, and heard musick, and said good things, and staid on the water four hours after midnight, and came well home, and slept, and dreamed of the regatta, and waked, and found yourself in bed, and thought now it is all over, only I must write about it to Lichfield.

We make a hard shift here to live on without a regatta. The cherries are ripe at Stowhill, and the currants are ripening, and the ladies are very kind to me. I wish, however, you would go to Surry, and come back, though I think it wiser to stay till the improvement in Ralph may become preceptible, else you will be apt to judge by your wishes and your imagination. Let us in the mean time hope the best. Let me but know when you go, and when you come back again.

If you or Mr. Thrale will write to Dr. Wetherell about Mr. Carter, it will please Wetherell, and keep the business in motion. They know not otherwise how to communicate news if they have it.

As to my hopes and my wishes, I can keep them to myself. They will perhaps grow less if they are laughed at. I needed not tell them, but that I have little else to write, and I needed not write, but that I do not like to be without hearing from you, because I love the Thrales and the Thralites.

I am, &c.

L E T.

LETTER CXVII.

MRS. THRALE to DR. JOHNSON.

DEAR SIR,

Streatham, June 24, 1775.

YOUR letters are very kind and very pleasing: the last came just as I was setting out for the regatta, of which you have a right to the best description I can give; but first let us talk of ourselves, each other, and our friends. I am glad the Miss Astons treat you with such good things, but would not have the currants of Stowhill preferred to the grapes of Streatham, for that is mere *partiality*, a word you never use, so you are bound to scorn the *thing*. Why does Miss * * * * never find a place in the letters from Lichfield. I thought her a mighty elegant amiable country lady.

Mr. * * * * is pedantic enough; a good man however you say, and has a strong desire of being agreeable. 'Tis very flattering to me when people make my talents the subject of their praises, in order to obtain your favour.

Lady * * * should not have taken the tea before her mother, that's certain, as her husband is dead, and all pretence of supporting the rank he had given her is past, so not only natural but artificial propriety was violated, and I can find no excuse for her conduct, except too attentive an observation to dear Mr. Johnson's odd speeches against parental authority.

Now for the regatta, of which, Baretti says, the first notion was taken from Venice, where the gondoliers practise rowing against each other perpetually, and I dare say 'tis good diversion where the weather invites, and the water seduces to such
enter-

entertainments;—here, however, it was not likely to answer; and I think nobody was pleased.

Well! Croesus promised a reward, you remember, for him who should produce a new delight; but the prize was never obtained, for nothing that was new proved delightful; and Dr. Goldsmith, three thousand years afterwards, found out, that whoever did a new thing did a bad thing, and whoever said a new thing said a false thing.—So yesternorning, a flag flying from some conspicuous steeple in Westminster gave notice of the approaching festival, and at noon the managers determined to hold it on that day. In about two hours the wind rose very high, and the river was exceedingly rough; but the lot was cast, and the ladies went on with their dresses. It had been agreed that all should wear white; but the ornaments were left to our own choice. I was afraid of not being fine enough; so I trimmed my white lutestring with silver gauze, and wore black ribbons intermixed. We had obtained more tickets than I hoped for, though Sir Thomas Robinson gave us none at last; but he gives one such a profusion of words, and bows, and compliments, that I suppose he thinks every thing else superfluous.—Mr. Cator was the man for a real favour at last, whose character is directly opposite, as you know; but if both are actuated by the spirit of kindness, let us try at least to love them both, —yet still—

Prefer the stronger effort of its pow'r,
And justly set the gem above the flow'r.

He wished Hester to go, and she wished it too, and her father wished it, so I would not stand out, though my fears for her health and safety lessened the pleasure her company always gives.—The
D'Avenants

D'Avenants then, Mr. Cator, Mr. Evans, Mr. Seward, and ourselves set about being happy with all our might—and tried for a barge to flutter in all together. The barges however were already full, and we were to be divided and put into separate boats. The water was rough, even seriously so; the time glided away in deliberation of what was to be done; and we resolved at last to run to the house of a gentleman in the Temple, of whom we knew nothing but that he was D'Avenant's friend, and look at the race from his windows—then drive away for Ranelagh in time to see the barges drawn up, and the company disembark. Of the race, however, scarce any thing could be seen, for clouds of dust that intercepted one's sight; and we have no balconies to see shows from, as are provided in countries where processions make much of the means of entertainments; so we discomposed our head-dresses against each other, by struggling for places in an open window, and then begged pardon with curtseys, which exposed our trains to be trod on, and made us still more out of humour. It was however a pleasure to look at the crowd of spectators. Every shop was shut; every street deserted; and the tops of all such houses as had any catch of the river swarmed with people like bees settling on a branch. Here is no exaggeration, upon my honour; even the lamp-irons on Westminster bridge were converted into seats, while every lighter lying in the Thames bore men up to the top-mast-head. This was the true wonder of the day. Baretti says, he will shew us finer sights when we go to Italy; I believe him; but shall we ever see so populous a city as London? So rich a city? So happy a city? I fancy not.

Let

Let bear or elephant be e'er so white,
The people sure, the people are the fight.

They could not indeed be very attentive to the games like those Horace talks of; for here was neither panther nor camel; no pretence to draw us together, as I could find;—yet they sat so thick upon the flating of Whitehall, that nobody could persuade me for a long while out of the notion that it was covered with black, till through a telescope we spied the *animals in motion*, like magnified mites in a bit of old cheese. Well! from this house in the Temple we hasted away to Ranelagh, happy in having at least convinced a hundred folks we never saw before and perhaps never shall see again, that we had tickets for the regatta, and fine clothes to spoil with the rain, and that we were not come thither like the vulgar—in good time! only to see the boat-race. And now, without one image of Cleopatra's galley, or Virgil's games, or one pretext to say how it put us in mind of either, we drove to Ranelagh, and told each other all the way how pretty it would be to look at the ladies disembarking to musick, and walking in procession up to the rotunda. But the night came on; the wind roared; the rain fell; and the barges missing their way, many came up to the wrong stairs; the managers endeavoured to rectify the mistake, and drive them back, that some order might be kept, and some appearance of regularity might be made; but the women were weary and wet, and in no disposition to try for further felicity out of the old common road, so the procession was spoiled, and as to musick we heard none but screams of the frightened company as they were tossed about at the moment of getting to shore. Once more then all were turned loose to look for pleasure where it could be found:

the rotunda was not to be opened till twelve o'clock, when the bell was to call us to sup there; the temporary building was not finished, and the rain would not permit walking in the garden.—Calamity however vanishes often upon a near approach, does not it? as well as happiness. We all crowded into the new building, from whence we drove the carpenters, and called for cards, without the help of which, by some fatality, no day dedicated to amusement is ever able to end.

Queeney said there was no loss of the ornaments intended to decorate Neptune's hall; for she saw no attempt at embellishment, except a few fluttering rags like those which dangle from a dyer's pole into the street, and in that room we sat telling opinions, adventures, &c. till supper was served, which the men said was an execrable one, and I thought should have been finer. Was nothing good then? you begin to exclaim; here is desire of saying something where little is to be said, and lamentations are the readiest nonsense my mistress can find to fill her letter with. No, no; I would commend the concert and the catch-fingers for an hour if you would hear me; the musick was well selected, and admirably executed; nor did the company look much amiss when all the dismal was over, and we walked round Ranelagh a little in the old way; every body being dressed in white was no advantage indeed to the general appearance. Lord Bacon, who knows every thing small and great better than any one else, very judiciously recommends full colours and loud musick for a midnight show; the pale pinks and pea-greens make a mean figure by candle light, says he, and if they look pitiful, how much more so does white look? the truth is, one has always an idea of privation conveyed to one's mind by it, which inspires me with melancholy;
and

and perhaps the consciousness that it implies weakness may be the latent reason—for I really never did hear of a white horse winning a race (we don't talk of grey); and I well remember the difficulty of raising white fawns among the deer when I was a child; the *blanche rose* has a scent less powerful than the red one; and you always chuse to eat black grapes. Under the pole every creature becomes white we know, for no very creditable reason; and in a few years my hair will probably confirm my argument.—In the meantime we will finish the regatta, which ended with country-dances.—But I think the rakes and courtezans had that part of the diversion to themselves. There were a vast number of our common acquaintance among the company. You will be told that I was too fine, and 'tis partly true, but the other extreme would have been worse, and Mr. Thrale chose my dress himself.

We returned safe home about five or six o'clock; a new scene to Hester, who behaved sweetly, and had no fears in the crowd, but prodigious surprise in finding it broad day when we came out. I might have wondered too, for few people have frequented publick places less than myself, and for the first six years after my marriage, as you know, I never set my foot in any theatre or place of entertainment at all. What most amazed me about the regatta, however, was the mixture of company, when tickets were so difficult to obtain. Some body talked at Ranelagh of two ladies that were drowned, but I have no doubt that was a dream.

Will this account serve to divert Miss Lucy Porter and your other Lichfield ladies? If it will, the hour has been happily spent that wrote the *immortal letter of the regatta*. Of the next frolick we engage in I hope you will be yourself *pars*

magna, or at worst I hope you will hear it from the lips of

Your ever faithful,

and obedient servant.

P. S. I will lose as little of the epitaph as 'tis possible, nay I will lose none, for the reduction of the character will accommodate matters to the stone, and the words are not useless, because they are not large.—My mother's character will bear the *nearest approach* in every sense; and your writing is worth more I hope than walking five steps to read it, so pray leave nothing out: she cannot be praised too much; and if I did not think that compression added force, I should not find her panegyrick half long enough even now.



LETTER CXVIII.

To MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

July 26, 1775.

THAT the regatta disappointed you is neither wonderful nor new; all pleasure preconceived and preconcerted ends in disappointment; but disappointment, when it involves neither shame nor loss, is as good as success; for it supplies as many images to the mind, and as many topicks to the tongue. I am glad it failed for another reason, which looks more sage than my reasons commonly try to look; this, I think, is Queeney's first excursion into the regions of pleasure, and I should

should not wish to have her too much pleased. It is as well for her to find that pleasures have their pains; and that bigger misses who are at Ranelagh when she is in bed, are not so much to be envied as they would wish to be, or as they may be represented.

So you left out the * * * *s, and I suppose they did not go. It will be a common place for you and Queeney fourscore years hence; and my master and you may have recourse to it sometimes. But I can only listen. I am glad that you were among the finest.

Nothing was the matter between me and Miss * * * *. We are all well enough now. Miss Porter went yesterday to church, from which she had been kept a long time. I fancy that I shall go on Thursday to Ashbourne, but do not think that I shall stay very long. I wish you were gone to Surry and come well back again, and yet I would not have you go too soon. Perhaps I do not very well know what I would have; it is a case not extremely rare. But I know I would hear from you by every post, and therefore I take care that you should every post day hear from me.

I am, &c.

L E T.

LETTER CXIX.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

Ashbourne, July 1, 1775.

ON Thursday I came to Dr. Taylor's, where I live as I am used to do, and as you know. He has gotten nothing new, but a very fine looking-glass, and a bull-bitch. The lets bull is now grown the bigger. But I forgot; he has bought old Shakespeare, the race-horse, for a stallion. He has likewise some fine iron gates which he will set up somewhere. I have not yet seen the old horse.

You are very much enquired after, as well here as at Lichfield.

This I suppose will go after you to Suffex, where I hope you will find every thing either well or mending. You never told me whether you took Queeney with you; nor ever so much as told me the name of the little one. May be you think I don't care about you.

I behaved myself so well at Lichfield, that Lucy says I am grown better; and the ladies at Stowhill expect I should come back thither before I go to London, and offer to entertain me if Lucy refuses.

I have this morning received a letter from Mrs. Chambers of Calcutta. The Judge has a fore eye, and could not write. She represents all as going on very well, only Chambers does not now flatter himself that he shall do much good.

I am, &c.

L E T.

LETTER CXX.

To Mrs. THRALE.

NOW, thinks my dearest Mistress to herself, sure I am at last gone too far to be pestered every post with a letter: he knows that people go into the country to be at quiet; he knows too that when I have once told the story of Ralph, the place where I am affords me nothing that I shall delight to tell, or he will wish to be told; he knows how troublesome it is to write letters about nothing; and he knows that he does not love trouble himself, and therefore ought not to force it upon others.

But, dearest Lady, you may see once more how little knowledge influences practice, notwithstanding all this knowledge, you see, here is a letter.

Every body says the prospect of harvest is uncommonly delightful; but this has been so long the Summer talk, and has been so often contradicted by Autumn, that I do not suffer it to lay much hold on my mind. Our gay prospects have now for many years together ended in melancholy retrospects. Yet I am of opinion that there is much corn upon the ground. Every dear year encourages the farmer to sow more and more, and favourable seasons will be sent at last. Let us hope that they will be sent now.

The Doctor and Frank are gone to see the hay. It was cut on Saturday, and yesterday was well wetted; but to day has its fill of sunshine. I hope the hay at Streatham was plentiful, and had good weather.

Our lawn is as you left it, only the pool is so full of mud that the water-fowl have left it. Here
are

are many calves, who, I suppose, all expect to be great bulls and cows.

Yesterday I saw Mrs. Diot at church, and shall drink tea with her some afternoon.

I cannot get free from this vexatious flatulence, and therefore have troublesome nights, but otherwise I am not very ill. Now and then a fit; and not violent. I am not afraid of the waterfall. I now and then take physick; and suspect that you were not quite right in omitting to let blood before I came away. But I do not intend to do it here.

You will now find the advantage of having made one at the regatta. You will carry with you the importance of a publick personage, and enjoy a superiority which, having been only local and accidental, will not be regarded with malignity. You have a subject by which you can gratify general curiosity, and amuse your company without bewildering them. You can keep the vocal machine in motion, without those seeming paradoxes that are sure to disgust; without that temerity of censure which is sure to provoke enemies; and that exuberance of flattery which experience has found to make no friends. It is the good of publick life that it supplies agreeable and general conversation. Therefore wherever you are, and whatever you see, talk not of the Punick war; nor of the depravity of human nature; nor of the slender motives of human actions; nor of the difficulty of finding employment or pleasure; but talk, and talk, and talk of the regatta, and keep the rest for, dearest Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T-

LETTER CXXI.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM, Ashbourne, July 6, 1775.

DR. Taylor says he shall be very glad to see you all here again, if you have a mind of retirement. But I told him that he must not expect you this summer; and he wants to know why?

I am glad you have read Boswell's journal, because it is something for us to talk about, and that you have seen the Hornecks, because that is a publick theme. I would have you see, and read, and hear, and talk it all, as occasion offers.

Pray thank Queeney for her letter. I still hope good of poor Ralph; but sure never poor rogue was so troubled with his teeth. I hope occasional bathing, and keeping him about two minutes with his body immersed, may promote the discharge from his head, and set his little brain at liberty. Pray give my service to my dear friend Harry, and tell him that Mr. Murphy does not love him better than I do.

I am inclined to be of Mr. Thrale's mind about the changes in the state. A dissolution of the Parliament would, in my opinion, be little less than a dissolution of the government, by the encouragement which it would give to every future faction to disturb the publick tranquillity. Who would ever want places and power if perseverance in falsehood and violence of outrage were found to be certain and infallible means of procuring them? yet I have so little confidence in our present statesmen, that I know not whether any thing

thing is less likely, for being either absurd or dangerous. I am, dearest Lady,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CXXII.

T O M R S . T H R A L E .

D E A R E S T M A D A M ,

July 7, 1775.

WHAT can be the reason that I hear nothing from you or from your house? Are you well? Yet while I am asking the question, I know not when I shall be able to receive your answer, for I am waiting for the chance of a place in a coach which will probably be come and gone in an hour.

Yesterday the Vice-Chancellor told me, that he has written to the Archbishop of York. His letter, as he represented it to me, was very proper and persuasive. I believe we shall establish Mr. Carter the riding master of Oxford.

Still I cannot think why I hear nothing from you.

The coach is full. I am therefore at full leisure to continue my letter; but I have nothing more to say of business, but that the Vice-Chancellor is for adding to the riding-school a house and stable for the master. Nor of myself but that I grieve and wonder, and hope and fear about my dear friends at Streatham. But I may have a letter this afternoon—Sure it will bring me no bad news. You never neglected writing so before. If I have
a letter

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 187

a letter to-day I will go away as soon as I can; if I have none, I will stay till this may be answered, if I do not come back to town.

I am, &c.

LETTER CXXIII.

TO MRS. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Ashbourne.

I AM sure I write and write, and every letter that comes from you changes me with not writing. Since I wrote to Queney I have written twice to you, on the 6th and the 9th, be pleased to let me know whether you have them or have them not. That of the 6th you should regularly have had on the 8th, yet your letter of the 9th seems not to mention it; all this puzzles me.

Poor dear * * * ! He only grows dull because he is sickly; age has not yet begun to impair him; nor is he such a chameleon as to take immediately the colour of his company. When you see him again, you will find him reanimated. Most men have their bright and their cloudy days, at least they have days when they put their powers into act, and days when they suffer them to repose.

Fourteen thousand pounds make a sum sufficient for the establishment of a family, and which, in whatever flow of riches or confidence of prosperity, deserves to be very seriously considered. I hope a great part of it has paid debts, and no small part bought land. As for gravelling and walking

walling and digging, though I am not much delighted with them, yet something, indeed much, must be allowed to every man's taste. He that is growing rich has a right to enjoy part of the growth his own way. I hope to range in the walk, and row upon the water, and devour fruit from the wall.

Dr. Taylor wants to be gardening. He means to buy a piece of ground in the neighbourhood, and surround it with a wall, and build a gardener's house upon it, and have fruit, and be happy. Much happiness it will not bring him; but what can he do better? If I had money enough, what would I do? Perhaps, if you and master did not hold me, I might go to Cairo, and down the Red Sea to Bengal; and take a ramble in India. Would this be better than building and planting? It would surely give more variety to the eye, and more amplitude to the mind. Half fourteen thousand would send me out to see other forms of existence, and bring me back to describe them.

I answer this the day on which I had yours of the 9th, that is on the 11th. Let me know when it comes,

I am, &c.

~~~~~  
L E T T E R    CXXIV.

To MRS. T H R A L E.

Ashbourne, Wednesday, July 12, 1775.

DEAR MADAM,

ON Monday I was not well, 'but I grew better at night, and before morning was, as the doctors say, out of danger.

We

We have no news here, except that on Saturday Lord Scarfsdale dined with the Doctor. He is a very gentlemanlike man. On Sunday Mr. \* \* \* \* \* paid a visit from Lichfield, and having nothing to say, said nothing, and went away.

Our great cattle, I believe, go on well, but our deer have died; all but five does and the poor buck. We think the ground too wet for them.

I have enclosed a letter from Mrs. Chambers, partly, perhaps wholly, for Mr. Baret's amusement and gratification, though he has probably a much longer letter of his own, which he takes no care to send me.

Mr. L—— and the Doctor still continue at variance; and the Doctor is afraid, and Mr. L—— not desirous of a reconciliation. I therefore step over at by-times, and of by-times I have enough.

Mrs. Dale has been ill, and at fourscore, has recovered. She is much extenuated, but having the summer to favour her, will, I think renew her hold on life.

To the Diots I yet owe a visit. Mr. Gell is now rejoicing, at fifty-seven, for the birth of an heir-male. I hope here is news. Mr. \* \* \* \* \* and \* \* \* \* \* seem to be making preparations for war.

Now I flatter myself that you want to know something about me. My spirits are now and then in an uneasy flutter, but upon the whole not very bad.

We have here a great deal of rain; but this is a very rainy region. I hear nothing but good of the harvest; but the expectation is higher of the wheat than of the barley, but I hope there will be barley enough for us, and Mr. S——, and Lady L——, and something still to spare. I am, dearest sweetest Lady,

Your, &c.



## LETTER CXXV.

MRS. THRALE to DR. JOHNSON.

DEAR SIR,

THE letters are all come; and very kind letters they are; and I always wish them longer and less frequent; for when you once turn the page I am sure of a disquisition, or an observation, or a little scold, or something.—When you write less than twenty lines at once, 'tis only a scrap rent from the next week's chat, for what shall we have to talk if all the facts are sent flying so between Ashbourne and Streatham? I will keep the story of the fourteen thousand pounds till we meet; so I will all family concerns, unless little Queeney sends her *country post*, as usual, to give information of a new *fall of ducks*, or some such important intelligence, which will not greatly interfere with my project. At present the last paragraph of your last long letter is much in my head; and Mr. Thrale said, when we read it together, that you should not travel alone, if he could once see this dear little boy quite well, or see me well persuaded (as many are) that nothing ails him.

Why, what an uncomfortable reflection it is at last, that those who are best qualified to travel, and tell what they have seen at their return, should be almost always obliged, for one reason or another, to stay at home. My great delight, like yours, would be to see how life is carried on in other countries, how various climates produce various

various effects, and how different notions of religion and government operate upon the human manners and the human mind; for 'tis they at last which cause all the distinction between national characters, as the method in which our bones and fibres are disposed creates all the variety observed in the human figure; yet I do not commend those voyagers who teize one with too much of such stuff to shew their own profundity, any more than I like a painter who exhibits none but anatomical figures: I think, however, we have had little to lament on that side lately, as counting pictures and describing ruins seems to have been the sole business of modern travellers—but when *we* go to *Cairo*, one shall take one department, another shall take another, and so a pretty book may be made out amongst us, that shall be commended, and censured, and cuffed about the town for a twelvemonth, if no new tub takes the whale's attention.

Well! now all this is nonsense, and fancy, and flight, you know, for my master has his great casks to mind, and I have my little children, but he has really half a mind to cross the water for half a year's frisk to Italy, or France, if we could leave matters so that we might not be frightened or called back to any vexation. For digging, walling, or planting, we should be better qualified at our return, and we would shake off our superflux of science to dear Dr. Taylor—to whom make in the mean time our best compliments, with love to his Jigg and Jessamy—I should not expect to see their superiors in any country, but the foreign a/s we admired at Blenheim might measure against either of them as well as I remember.

You account very tenderly for \* \* \* \* 's dullness, it was perhaps only accidental; but if a man will never add to his original stock by reading,  
and



and keep on living away upon what he set out with, dullness in conversation must finally ensue. A besieged town is always obliged to capitulate at last, if strongly invested, and all foreign supplies cut off, however well stored with provision when the blockade begun. Mr. Thrale said he was more agreeable this afternoon, but I told him starving produced a fever always in the last stage of a life losing by famine, and his friend's warmth in conversation was occasioned by nothing better.

Would it not be wiser to talk of the regatta than make such Welch speeches as these?—but nobody was by.

I said I would write nothing of family matters, but here is a letter from Suffex come, that will make me write of nothing else. The child is very bad I am sure, but I had better go and see, for the suspense is terrible, and these nasty posts!

The illness of this boy frights me for all the rest; if any of them have a headach it puts me in an agony, a broken leg would less affect my peace. —So many to have the same disorder is dreadful. What can be the meaning of it?

Sophy complained yesterday, but I hope it was on purpose to fright me.

Send me some comfortable words; do, dear Sir; and believe me ever

Your obliged faithful servant,

L E T-

LETTER CXXVI.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

Ashbourne, July, 1775.

I AM sorry that my poor little friend Ralph goes on no better. We must see what time will do for him.

I hope Harry is well. I had a very pretty letter from Queeney; and hope she will be kind to my hen and her ten chickens, and mind her book.

I forget whether I tell some things, and may perhaps tell them twice, but the matter is not great, only, as you observe, the more we write the less we shall have to say when we meet.

Are we to go all to Brighthelmstone in the Autumn, or have you satiated yourself with this visit? I have only one reason for wishing you to go, and that reason is far enough from amounting to necessity.

That \* \* \* \* 's simplicity should be forgiven, for his benevolence is very just; and I will not now say any thing in opposition to your kind resolution. It is pity that any good man should ever seem, or ever be ridiculous.

This letter will be short, for I am so much disordered by indigestion, of which I can give no account, that it is difficult to write more than that I am, dearest Lady,

Your, &c.

## L E T T E R CXXVII.

To MRS. T H R A L E.

DEAREST MADAM,

July 13, 1775.

• I N return for your three letters I do not find myself able to send you more than two; but if I had the prolixity of an emperour, it should be all at your service.

Poor Ralph! I think what they purpose to do for his relief is right, but that it will be efficacious I cannot promise.

Your anxiety about your other babies is, I hope, superfluous. Miss and Harry are as safe as ourselves; they have outlived the age of weakness; their fibres are now elastick, and their headaches, when they have them, are from accidental causes, heat or indigestion.

If Susy had been at all disposed to this horrid malady, it would have laid hold on her in her early state of laxity and feebleness. That native vigour which has carried her happily through so many obstructions to life and growth, will, I think, certainly preserve her from a disease most likely to fall only on the weak.

Of the two small ladies it can only be said, that there is no present appearance of danger; and of fearing evils merely possible there is no end. We are told by the Lord of Nature, that "for the day its own evil is sufficient."

Now to lighter things, and those of weight enough to another. I am still of opinion, that we shall bring the Oxford riding-school to bear. \* \* \* \* \* is indeed *un esprit foible*, and perhaps too easily repressed, but Dr. Wetherell is in earnest. I would come back through Oxford, but that

that at this time there is nobody there. But I will not desist. I think to visit them next term.

Do not let poor Lizard be degraded for five pounds. I sent you word that I would spend something upon him; and indeed for the money which it would cost to take him to Taylor or Langton and fetch him back, he may be kept while he stands idle, a long time in the stable.

Mrs. Williams has been very ill, and it would do her good if you would send a message of enquiry, and a few strawberries or currants.

Mr. Flint's little girl is alive and well, and prating, as I hope yours, my dear Lady, will long continue.

The hay harvest is here very much incommoded by daily showers, which, however, seem not violent enough to beat down the corn.

I cannot yet fix the time of coming home. Dr. Taylor and I spend little time together, yet he will not yet be persuaded to hear of parting. I am,

Dearest Lady,

Your, &c.



L E T T E R CXXVIII.

To MRS. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Ashbourne, July 15, 1775.

**Y**O U are so kind every post, that I now regularly expect your favours. You have indeed more materials for writing than I. Here are only I and  
O 2 the

the Doctor, and of him I see not much. You have Master, and young Master, and Misses, besides geese; and turkies, and ducks, and hens.

The Doctor says, that if Mr. Thrale comes so near as Derby without seeing us, it will be a sorry trick. I wish, for my part, that he may return soon, and rescue the fair captives from the tyranny of B——i. Poor B——i! do not quarrel with him; to neglect him a little will be sufficient. He means only to be frank, and manly, and independent, and perhaps, as you say, a little wise. To be frank he thinks is to be cynical, and to be independent is to be rude. Forgive him, dearest Lady, the rather, because of his misbehaviour, I am afraid he learned part of me. I hope to set him hereafter a better example.

Your concern for poor Ralph, and your resolution to visit him again, is too parental to be blamed. You may perhaps do good; you do at least your duty, and with that we must be contented; with that indeed, if we attained it, we ought to be happy: but who ever attained it?

You have perceived, by my letters, that without knowing more than that the *estate* was unsettled, I was inclined to a settlement. I am likewise for an entail. But we will consult men of experience, for that which is to hinder my dear Harry from mischief when he comes to age may be done with mature deliberation.

You have not all the misery in the world to yourself; I was last night almost convulsed with flatulence, after having gone to bed I thought so well—but it does not much trouble me when I am out of bed. To your anxiety about your children I wrote lately what I had to say. I blame it so little, that I think you should add a small particle of anxiety about me; for I am, dearest Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T-

## LETTER CXXIX.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

July 17, 1775.

THE post is come without a letter; how could I be so fullen—but *he must be humble who would please*. Perhaps you are gone to Brighthelmstone, and so could not write; however it be, this I feel, that I have no letter; but then I have sometimes had two, and if I have as many letters as there come posts nobody will pity me if I were to complain.

How was your hay made? The Doctor has had one part well housed, another wetted and dried till it is hardly worth the carriage; and now many acres newly mown, that have hitherto had good weather. This may be considered as a foreign article; the domestick news is, that our bull-bitch has puppies, and that our fix calves are no longer to be fed by hand, but to live on grass.

Mr. Langly has made some improvements in his garden. A rich man might do more; but what he has done is well.

You have never in all your letters touched but once upon my master's Summer projects. Is he towering into the air, and tending to the centre? Is he excavating the earth, or covering its surface with edifices? Something he certainly is doing, and something he is spending. A genius never can be quite still. I do not murmur at his expences; a good harvest will supply them.

We talk here of Polish oats, and Siberian barley, of which both are said to be more productive, to ripen in less time, and to afford better grain than the English. I intend to procure specimens of

of both, which we will try in some spots of our own ground.

The Doctor has no great mind to let me go. Shall I tease him, and plague him till he is weary of me? I am, I hope, pretty well, and fit to come home. I shall be expected by all my ladies to return through Lichfield, and to stay there a while; but if I thought you wanted me, I hope you know what would be done by,

Dearest, dearest Madam,

Your, &c.



### L E T T E R   C X X X .

T O   M R S .   T H R A L E .

DEAR MADAM,

Ashbourne, July 20, 1775.

**P**OOR Ralph! he is gone; and nothing remains but that you comfort yourself with having done your best. The first wish was, that he might live long to be happy and useful; the next, that he might not suffer long pain. The second wish has been granted. Think now only on those which are left you. I am glad that you went to Brighthelmston, for your journey is a standing proof to you of your affection and diligence. We can hardly be confident of the state of our own minds, but as it stands attested by some external action; we are seldom sure that we sincerely meant what we omitted to do.

Dr.

Dr. Taylor says, that Mr. Thrale has not used us well, in coming so near without coming nearer. I know not what he can say for himself, but I know that he can take shelter in sullen silence.

There is, I think, still the same prospect of a plentiful harvest. We have in this part of the kingdom had rain to swell the grain, and sunshine to ripen it. I was yesterday to see the Doctor's Poland oats. They grow, for a great part, four feet high, with a stalk equal in bulk and strength to wheaten straw. We were of opinion that they must be reaped, as the lower joints would be too hard for fodder. We will try them.

Susy was always my little girl. See what she is come to; you must keep her in mind of me, who was always on her side. Of Mrs. Fanny I have no knowledge.

You have two or three of my letters to answer, and I hope you will be copious and distinct, and tell me a great deal of your mind; a dear little mind it is; and I hope always to love it better as I know it more.

I am, &c.

—♦♦♦♦♦—  
L E T T E R CXXXI.

To MRS. T H R A L E,

DEAR LADY,

Ashbourne, July 21, 1775.

W H E N you write next direct to Lichfield, for I think to move that way on Tuesday, and in no long time to move homewards, when we will have  
a serious



a serious consultation, and try to do every thing for the best.

I shall be glad of a letter from dear Queeney, and am not sorry that she wishes for me. When I come we will enter into an alliance defensive at least.

Mr. B——i very elegantly sent his pupil's letter to Mrs. Williams without a cover, in such a manner that she knows not whence it was transmitted.

I do not mean to bleed but with your concurrence, though I am troubled with eruptions, which I cannot suppress by frequent physick.

As my master staid only one day, we must forgive him, yet he knows he staid only one day, because he thought it not worth his while to stay two.

You and B——i are friends again. My dear mistress has the quality of being easily reconciled, and not easily offended. Kindness is a good thing in itself; and there are few things that are worthy of anger, and still fewer that can justify malignity.

Nothing remains for the present, but that you sit down placid and content, disposed to enjoy the present, and planning the proper use of the future liberalities of Providence. You have really much to enjoy, and, without any wild indulgence of imagination, much to expect. In the mean time, however, life is gliding away, and another state is hastening forwards. You were but five-and-twenty when I knew you first. What I shall be next September I confess I have *laceté* enough to turn aside from thinking.

I am glad you read Boswell's journal; you are now sufficiently informed of the whole transaction, and need not regret that you did not make the tour of the Hebrides.

You

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 201

You have done me honour in naming me your trustee, and have very judiciously chosen Cator. I believe our fidelity will not be exposed to any strong temptations.

I am, &c.

—•••••  
L E T T E R CXXXII,

To MRS. THRALE.



DEAR MADAM,

July 24. 1775.

BE pleased to return my thanks to Queeney for her pretty little letter. I hope the peacock will recover. It is pity we cannot catch the fellow; we would make him drink at the pump. The victory over the poor wild cat delights me but little. I had rather he had taken a chicken than lost his life.

To-morrow I go to Lichfield. My company would not any longer make the Doctor happy. He wants to be rambling with his Ashbourne friends. And it is perhaps time for me to think of coming home. Which way I shall take I do not know.

Miss says, that you have recovered your spirits, and that you are well. Pray do not grudge the trouble of telling me so your ownself; for I do not find my attention to you and your sensations at all lessened by this time of absence, which always appears to my imagination much longer than when I count it.

Now to-morrow I expect to see Lucy Porter and Mrs. Adey, and to hear how they have gone on

on at Lichfield ; and then for a little I shall wander about as the birds of passage circle and flutter before they set out on the main flight.

I have been generally without any violent disorder of either mind or body, but every now and then ailing, but so that I could keep it to myself.

Are we to go to Brighthelmstone this Autumn ? I do not enquire with any great solicitude. You know one reason, and it will not be easy to find another, except that which brings all thither that go, unwillingness to stay at home, and want of power to supply with either business or amusement the cravings of the day. From this distress all that know either you or me, will suppose that we might rescue ourselves, if we would, without the help of a bath in the morning and an assembly at night.

I am, &c.



### LETTER CXXXIII.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

Lichfield, July 26, 1775.

**Y**ESTERDAY I came hither. After dinner I went to Stowhill; there I was pampered, and had an uneasy night. Physick to day put me out of order; and for some time I forgot that this is post night.

Nothing very extraordinary has happened at Lichfield since I went away. Lucy Porter is better,

ter, and has got her lame hand out of the bag. The rest of your friends I have not seen.

Having staid long enough at Athbourne, I was not sorry to leave it. I hindered some of Taylor's diversions, and he supplied me with very little. Having seen the neighbouring places, I had no curiolity to gratify; and having few new things, we had little new talk.

When I came I found Lucy at her book. She had Hammond's Commentary on the Psalms before her. He is very learned, she says, but there is enough that any body may understand.

Now I am here I think myself a great deal nearer London than before, for though the distance is not very different, I am here in the way of carriages, and can easily get to Birmingham, and so to Oxford; but I know not which way I shall take, but some way or other I hope to find, that may bring me back again to Streatham; and then I shall see what have been my master's goings on, and will try whether I shall know the old places.

As I lift up my head from the paper, I can look into Lucy's garden. Her walls have all failed. I believe she has had hardly any fruit but gooseberries; but so much verdure looks pretty in a town.

When you read my letters I suppose you are very proud to think how much you excel in the correspondence; but you must remember that your materials are better. You have a family, and friends, and hopes, and fears, and wishes, and aversions, and all the ingredients that are necessary to the composition of a letter. Here sit poor I, with nothing but my own solitary individuality; doing little, and suffering no more than I have often suffered; hearing nothing that I can repeat; seeing nothing that I can relate; talking, when I  
do

do talk, to those whom you cannot regard ; and at this moment hearing the curfew, which you cannot hear. I am,

Dearest, dearest Lady,

Your, &c.



L E T T E R    CXXXIV.

To MRS. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Lichfield, July.

**D**O not say that I never write to you, and do not think that I expected to find any friends here that could make me wish to prolong my stay. For your strawberries, however, I have no care. Mrs. Cobb has strawberries, and will give me as long as they last ; and she has cherries too. Of the strawberries at Streatham I consign my part to Miss and Harry. I hope Susy grows and Lucy begins to walk. Though this rainy weather confines us all in the house, I have neither frolicked nor fretted.

In the tumult, whatever it was, at your house, I hope my countrywomen either had no part, or behaved well. I told Mr. Heartwell about three days ago, how well Warren was liked in her place.

I have passed one day at Birmingham with my old friend Hector—there's a name—and his sister, an old love. My mistress is grown much older than my friend.

—O, quid

—O, quid habes illius, illius  
Quæ spirabat amores,  
Quæ me furpuerat mihi.

Time will impair the body, and uses us well if  
it spares the mind.

I am, &c.



LETTER CXXXV.

TO MRS. THRALE.

MADAM,

July 29, 1775.

THE rain caught me at Stowhill, and kept me till it is very late; I must however write, for I am enjoined to tell you how much Mrs. Lucy was pleased with your present, and to entreat you to excuse her from writing, because her hand is not yet recovered. She is very glad of your notice, and very thankful.

I am very desirous that Mr. \* \* \* should be sent for a few weeks to Brighthelmstone. Air, and vacancy, and novelty, and the consciousness of his own value, and the pride of such distinction and delight in Mr. Thrale's kindness, would, as Cheney phrases it, afford all the relief that human art can give, or human nature receive. Do not read this slightly, you may prolong a very useful life.

Whether the pine-apples be ripe or rotten, whether the Duke's venison be baked or roasted, I begin to think it time I were at home. I have staid till perhaps nobody wishes me to stay longer,  
except

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except the ladies on the hill, who offer me a lodging, and though not ill, am unfettled enough to wish for change of place, even though that change were not to bring me to Streatham; but thither I hope I shall quickly come, and find you all well, and gay, and happy, and catch a little gaiety, and health, and happiness among you.

I am, Dearest of all dear Ladies,

Your, &c.



L E T T E R   CXXXVI.

T O   M R S .   T H R A L E .

DEAR, MADAM,

August 1, 1775.

**I** WONDER how it could happen. I forgot that the post went out yesternight, and so omitted to write; I therefore put this by the by-post, and hope it will come, that I may not lose my regular letter.

This was to have been my last letter from this place, but Lucy says I must not go this week. Fits of tenderness with Mrs. Lucy are not common; but she seems now to have a little paroxysm, and I was not willing to counteract it. When I am to go I shall take care to inform you. The lady at Stowhill says, how comes Lucy to be such a sovereign, all the town besides could not have kept you.

America now fills every mouth, and some heads, and a little of it shall come into my letter. I do  
not

not much like the news. Our troops have indeed the superiority; five-and-twenty hundred have driven five thousand from their intrenchment; but the Americans fought skilfully; had coolness enough in the battle to carry off their men; and seem to have retreated orderly, for they were not pursued. They want nothing but confidence in their leaders, and familiarity with danger. Our business is to pursue their main army, and disperse it by a decisive battle; and then waste the country till they sue for peace. If we make war by parties and detachments, dislodge them from one place, and exclude them from another, we shall by a local, gradual, and ineffectual war, teach them our own knowledge, harden their obstinacy, and strengthen their confidence, and at last come to fight on equal terms of skill and bravery, without equal numbers.

Mrs. Williams wrote me word, that you had honoured her with a visit, and *behaved lovely*.

Mr. Thrale left off digging his pool, I suppose, for want of water. The first thing to be done is by digging in three or four places, to try how near the springs will rise to the surface; for though we cannot hope to be always full, we must be sure never to be dry.

Poor \* \* \* \* ! I am sorry for him. It is sad to give a family of children no pleasure but by dying. It was said of Otho: *Hoc tantum fecit nobile quod perit*. It may be changed to \* \* \* \*: *Hoc tantum fecit utile*.

If I could do Mr. Carter any good at Oxford, I could easily stop there; for through it, if I go by Birmingham, I am likely to pass; but the place is now a fullen solitude. Whatever can be done I am ready to do; but our operations must for the present be at London.

I am, &c.

L E T.



## LETTER CXXXVII.

TO MRS. THRALE.

MADAM,

Lichfield, August 2, 1775.

**I** DINED to-day at Stowhill, and am come away to write my letter. Never surely was I such a writer before. Do you keep my letters? I am not of your opinion that I shall not like to read them hereafter; for though there is in them not much history of mind, or any thing else, they will, I hope, always be in some degree the records of a pure and blameless friendship, and in some hours of languour and sadness may revive the memory of more cheerful times.

Why you should suppose yourself not desirous hereafter to read the history of your own mind, I do not see. Twelve years, on which you now look as on a vast expanse of life, will probably be passed over uniformly and smoothly with very little perception of your progress, and with very few remarks upon the way. That accumulation of knowledge which you promise to yourself, by which the future is to look back upon the present, with the superiority of manhood to infancy, will perhaps never be attempted, or never will be made; and you will find, as millions have found before you, that forty-five has made little sensible addition to thirty-three.

As the body after a certain time gains no increase of height, and little of strength, there is likewise a period, though more variable by external causes, when the mind commonly attains its stationary point and very little advances its powers of reflection, judgment, and ratiocination. The body may acquire new modes of motion, or  
new

new dexterities of mechanick operations, but its original strength receives not improvement; the mind may be stored with new languages, or new sciences, but its power of thinking remains nearly the same, and unless it attains new subjects of meditation, it commonly produces thoughts of the same force and the same extent, at very distant intervals of life, as the tree, unless a foreign fruit be ingrafted, gives year after year productions of the same form and the same flavour.

By intellectual force or strength of thought is meant the degree of power which the mind possesses of surveying the subject of meditation, with its circuit of concomitants, and its train of dependence.

Of this power, which all observe to be very different in minds, part seems the gift of nature, and part the acquisition of experience. When the powers of nature have attained their intended energy, they can be no more advanced. The shrub can never become a tree. And it is not unreasonable to suppose, that they are before the middle of life in their full vigour.

Nothing then remains but practice and experience; and perhaps why they do so little, may be worth enquiry.

But I have just now looked, and find it so late, that I will enquire against the next post night.

I am, &c.

## L E T T E R    CXXXVIII.

To MRS. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Lichfield, August 5, 1775.

INSTEAD of forty reasons for my return, one is sufficient,—that you wish for my company. I purpose to write no more till you see me. The ladies at Stowhill and Greenhill are unanimously of opinion, that it will be best to take a post-chaise, and not to be troubled with the vexations of a common carriage. I will venture to suppose the ladies at Streatham to be of the same mind.

You will now expect to be told why you will not be so much wiser as you expect, when you have lived twelve years longer.

It is said, and said truly, that experience is the best teacher; and it is supposed, that as life is lengthened experience is encreased. But a closer inspection of human life will discover that time often passes without any incident which can much enlarge knowledge or ratify judgment. When we are young we learn much, because we are universally ignorant; we observe every thing, because every thing is new. But after some years, the occurrences of daily life are exhausted; one day passes like another, in the same scene of appearances, in the same course of transactions; we have to do what we have often done, and what we do not try, because we do not wish to do much better; we are told what we already know, and therefore what repetition cannot make us know with greater certainty.

He that has early learned much, perhaps seldom makes, with regard to life and manners, much addition to his knowledge; not only because

cause as more is known there is less to learn, but because a mind stored with images and principles turns inwards for its own entertainment, and is employed in settling those ideas which run into confusion, and in recollecting those which are stealing away; practices by which wisdom may be kept but not gained. The merchant who was at first busy in acquiring money, ceases to grow richer, from the time when he makes it his business only to count it:

Those who have families or employments are engaged in business of little difficulty, but of great importance, requiring rather assiduity of practice than subtilty of speculation, occupying the attention with images too bulky for refinement, and too obvious for research. The right is already known, what remains is only to follow it. Daily business adds no more to wisdom, than daily lesson to the learning of the teacher. But of how few lives does not stated duty claim the greater part.

For the greater part of human minds never endeavour their own improvement. Opinions once received from instruction, or settled by whatever accident, are seldom recalled to examination; having being once supposed to be right, they are never discovered to be erroneous, for no application is made of any thing that time may present, either to shake or to confirm them. From this acquiescence in preconceptions none are wholly free; between fear of uncertainty, and dislike of labour, every one rests while he might yet go forwards; and they that were wise at thirty-three, are very little wiser at forty-five.

Of this speculation you are perhaps tired, and would rather hear of Sophy. I hope before this comes, that her head will be easier, and your head less filled with fears and troubles, which you

know are to be indulged only to prevent evil, not to increase it.

Your uneasiness about Sophy is probably unnecessary, and at worst your other children are healthful, and your affairs prosperous. Unmingled good cannot be expected; but as we may lawfully gather all the good within our reach, we may be allowed to lament after that which we lose. I hope your losses are at an end, and that as far as the condition of our present existence permits, your remaining life will be happy.

I am, &c.

—•••••  
L E T T E R   C X X X I X .

MRS. THRALE, to DR. JOHNSON.

August 9, 1775.

**Y**OU ask, dear Sir, if I keep your letters—to be sure I do; for though I would not serve you as you said you would serve Lady ———, were you married to her,—live a hundred miles off, and make her write once o'week (was not it?) because her conversation and manners were coarse, but her letters elegant: yet I have always found the best supplement for talk was writing, and yours particularly so. My only reason to suppose that we should dislike looking over the correspondence twelve or twenty years hence, was because the sight of it would *not* revive the memory of cheerful times at all. God forbid that I should be less happy then than now, when I am perpetually bringing or losing babies, both very dreadful

ful operations to me, and which tear mind and body both in pieces very cruelly. Sophy is at this very instant beginning to droop, or I dream so; and how is it likely one should ever have comfort in reviving the annals of vexation?

You say too, that I shall not grow wiser in twelve years, which is a bad account of futurity; but if I grow happier I shall grow wiser, for being less chained down to surrounding circumstances, what power of thinking my mind naturally possesses will have fair play at least. The mother or mistress of a large family is in the case of a tethered nag, always treading and subsisting on the same spot; she hears and repeats the same unregarded precepts; frets over that which no fretting can diminish; and hopes on, in very spite of experience, for what death does not ever suffer her to enjoy. With regard to mental improvement, Perkins might as well expect to grow rich by repeating the Multiplication Table, as I to grow wise by holding Watt's Art of Reading before my eyes. A finger-post, though it directs others on the road, cannot advance itself; was it once cut into coach-wheels, who knows how far it might travel?

When Ferguson made himself an astronomer, the other lads of the village were loading corn and pitching hay,—though with the same degree of leisure they might perhaps have attained the same degree of excellence; but they were *doing* while he was *thinking* you see, and when leisure is obtained, incidents, however trifling, may be used to advantage; besides, that 'tis better, as Skakespeare says, to be eaten up with the rust,

Than scour'd to nothing with perpetual motion.

So

So if ever I get quiet I shall get happy; and if I get happy I shall have a chance to get wise. Why, wisdom itself stands still, says Mr. Johnson, and then how will you advance? It will be an advancement to me to trace that very argument, and examine whether it has advanced or no. Was not it your friend M——l who first said, that next to winning at cards, the greatest happiness was losing at cards? I should feel the second degree of delight in assuring myself that there was no wisdom to be obtained. Baker's Reflections on Learning was always a favourite book with me, and he says, you have all been trotting in a circle these two or three thousand years—but let us join the team at least, and not stand gaping while others trot. The tethered horse we talked of just now, would beg to work in our mill, if he could speak; and an old captain of a ship told me, that when he set the marine society boys to run round the hoop for a pudding in fine weather, to divert the officers, those who were hardest lashed seldom lamented; but all cried, ready to break their hearts, who were left out of the game. Here is enough of this I believe.

We are all pleased that you intend to come home in a chaise. Who should you save sixteen shillings for? and how much richer would your heirs be for those sixteen shillings? Calculation is perpetually opposed to the spendthrift; but if misers would learn to count, they would be misers no longer: for how many years must a man live to save out of a small income one hundred pounds, even if he adopted every possible method? besides the ill-will of the world, which pursues avarice more closely, and watches it more narrowly than any other vice.

I have indeed often wondered that the bulk of mankind should look on a person who gains money  
unjustly

unjustly with less detestation than they survey the petty savings of him who lives penuriously ;—for the first is in every body's way, and if he excited every body's hatred, who need wonder ? while a hoarder injures no one but himself—yet even his heirs abhor him.

There is, however, little call I believe to make sermons against covetousness for the use of dear Mr. Johnson, or of his

Faithful and obedient servant,

H. L. THRALE.

Sophy is very sick, and we all wish you would come home.



LETTER CXL.

To Mrs. THRALE.

MADAM,

August 29, 1775.

HERE is a rout and bustle ; and a bustle and a rout ; as if nobody had ever before forgotten where a thing was laid. At last there is no great harm done ; both Colson and Scot have copies ; and real haste there is none. You will find it some day this week, and any day will serve, or perhaps we can recollect it between us.

About your memory we will, if you please, have some serious talk. I fret at your forgetfulness, as I do at my own. We will try to mend both ; yours at least is, I should hope, remediable.  
But,



But, however it happens, we are of late never together.

Am I to come to-morrow to the Borough, or will any one call on me? This sorry foot! and this sorry Dr. Lawrence, who says it is the gout! but then he thinks every thing the gout; and so I will try not to believe him. Into the sea I suppose you will send it, and into the sea I design it shall go.—Can you remember, dear Madam, that I have a lame foot? I am sure I cannot forget it; if you had one so painful, you would *so* remember it. Pain is good for the memory.

I am, &c.

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## LETTER CXLI.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

Lichfield, March 25, 1776.

THIS letter will not, I hope, reach you many days before me; in a distress which can be so little relieved, nothing remains for a friend but to come and partake it.

Poor dear sweet little boy! When I read the letter this day to Mrs. Aston, she said, "Such a death is the next to translation." Yet however I may convince myself of this, the tears are in my eyes, and yet I could not love him as you loved him, nor reckon upon him for a future comfort as you and his father reckoned upon him.

He is gone, and we are going! We could not have enjoyed him long, and shall not long be separated

parated from him. He has probably escaped many such pangs as you are now feeling.

Nothing remains, but that with humble confidence we resign ourselves to Almighty Goodness, and fall down, without irreverent murmurs, before the Sovereign Distributer of good and evil, with hope that though sorrow endureth for a night, yet joy may come in the morning.

I have known you, Madam, too long to think that you want any arguments for submission to the Supreme Will; nor can my consolation have any effect but that of shewing that I wish to comfort you. What can be done you must do for yourself. Remember first, that your child is happy; and then, that he is safe, not only from the ills of this world, but from those more formidable dangers which extend their mischief to eternity. You have brought into the world a rational being; have seen him happy during the little life that has been granted him; and can have no doubt but that his happiness is now permanent and immutable.

When you have obtained by prayer such tranquillity as nature will admit, force your attention, as you can, upon your accustomed duties and accustomed entertainments. You can do no more for our dear boy, but you must not therefore think less on those whom your attention may make fitter for the place to which he is gone.

I am, dearest, dearest Madam,

Your most affectionate humble servant.

L E T.

## L E T T E R    CXLII.

To   MRS.   T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

March 30, 1776.

SINCE, as Mr. Baretti informs us, our dear Queeney is grown better, I hope you will by degrees recover your tranquillity. Only by degrees, and those perhaps sufficiently slow, can the pain of an affliction like yours be abated. But though effects are not wholly in our power, yet Providence always gives us something to do. Many of the operations of nature may by human diligence be accelerated or retarded. Do not indulge your sorrow; try to drive it away by either pleasure or pain; for, opposed to what you are feeling, many pains will become pleasures. Remember the great precept, *Be not solitary; be not idle.*

But above all, resign yourself and your children to the Universal Father, the Author of Existence, and Governor of the Universe, who only knows what is best for all, and without whose regard not a sparrow falls to the ground.

That I feel what friendship can feel, I hope I need not tell you. I loved him as I never expect to love any other little boy; but I could not love him as a parent. I know that such a loss is a laceration of the mind. I know that a whole system of hopes, and designs, and expectations, is swept away at once, and nothing left but bottomless vacuity. What you feel I have felt, and hope that your disquiet will be shorter than mine.

Mr. Thrall sent me a letter from Mr. Boswell, I suppose to be inclosed. I was this day with  
Mrs.

Mrs. Montague, who, with every body else, laments your misfortune. I am, dearest Madam,

Your, &c.



L E T T E R CXLIII.

To MRS. THRALE.

DEAREST MADAM,

April 1, 1776.

WHEN you were gone, Mr. Thrale soon sent me away. I came next day, and was made to understand that when I was wanted I should be sent for; and therefore I have not gone yesterday or to-day, but I will soon go again whether invited or not.

You begin now I hope to be able to consider, that what has happened might have had great aggravations. Had you been followed in your intended travels by an account of this afflictive deprivation, where could have been the end of doubt, and surmise, and suspicion, and self-condemnation? You could not easily have been reconciled to those whom you left behind, or those who had persuaded you to go. You would have believed that he died by neglect, and that your presence would have saved him. I am glad of your letter from Marlborough, and hope you will try to force yourself to write. If grief either caused or aggravated poor Queeney's illness, you have taken the proper method for relieving it. Young minds easily receive new impressions.

Poor

Poor Peyton expired this morning. He probably during many years, for which he sat starving by the bed of a wife, not only useless but almost motionless, condemned by poverty to personal attendance, and by the necessity of such attendance chained down to poverty—he probably thought often how lightly he should tread the path of life without his burthen. Of this thought the admission was unavoidable, and the indulgence might be forgiven to frailty and distress. His wife died at last, and before she was buried he was seized with a fever, and is now going to the grave.

Such miscarriages, when they happen to those on whom many eyes are fixed, fill histories and tragedies; and tears have been shed for the sufferings, and wonder excited by the fortitude of those who neither did nor suffered more than Peyton.

I was on Saturday at Mrs. Montague's, who expressed great sensibility of your loss; and have this day received an invitation to a supper and a ball; but I returned my acknowledgment to the ladies, and let them know that I thought I should like the ball better another week. I am, dear Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T.

LETTER CXLIV.

TO MRS. THRALL.

DEAREST MADAM,

April 4, 1776.

I AM glad to hear of pretty Queeney's recovery, and your returning tranquillity. What we have suffered ought to make us remember what we have escaped. You might at as short a warning have been taken from your children, or Mr. Thrall might have been taken from us all.

Mr. Thrall, when he dismissed me, promised to call on me; he has never called, and I have never seen him. He said that he would go to the house, and I hope he has found something that laid hold on his attention.

I do not wish you to return, while the novelty of the place does any good either to you or Queeney, and longer I know you will not stay; there is therefore no need of soliciting your return. What qualification can be extracted from so sad an event, I derive from observing that Mr. Thrall's behaviour has united you to him by additional endearments. Every evil will be more easily borne while you fondly love one another; and every good will be enjoyed with increase of delight *pass compute*, to use the phrase of Cumberland. May your care of each other always increase! I am, dearest Madam,

Your, &c.

LET-

## LETTER CXLV.

To MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

April 9, 1776.

MR. Thrale's alteration of purpose is not weakness of resolution; it is a wise man's compliance with the change of things, and with the new duties which the change produces. Whoever expects me to be angry, will be disappointed. I do not even grieve at the effect, I grieve only at the cause.

Your business for the present is to seek for ease, and to go where you think it most likely to be found. There cannot yet be any place in your mind for mere curiosity. Whenever I can contribute to your tranquillity, I shall readily attend, and hope never to add to the evils that may oppress you. I will go with you to Bath, or stay with you at home.

I am very little disappointed. I was glad to go to places of so much celebrity, but had promised to myself no raptures, nor much improvement; nor is there any thing to be expected worth such a sacrifice as you might make.

Keep yourself busy, and you will in time grow cheerful. New prospects may open, and new enjoyments may come within your reach. I surely cannot but wish all evil removed from a house which has afforded my miseries all the succour which attention and benevolence could give. I am sorry not to owe so much, but to repay so little. What I can do, you may with great reason expect from, dearest Madam,

Your, &amp;c.

L E T.

## LETTER CXLVI.

MRS. THRALE to DR. JOHNSON.

MY DEAR SIR,

Bath, May 3, 1776.

THIS month, which finds or makes every body else inclined to be cheerful, finds me with hope depressed, sorrow renewed, and affliction budding out where pleasure only should vegetate. This little girl's state of health hinders me from recovering the loss I sustained in her brother.—What *can* ail her? I would have persuaded Mr. Thrale to persist in his intentions of travelling, had I not thought it dangerous to *her*; it would perhaps have been better for *us*; I mean for our health, not for our improvement, because going abroad to see objects with a pre-occupied mind is mere loss of time;—one remembers nothing one either sees or hears when in a state of affliction. Poor people have always bad memories, you may observe;—how should they have good ones? their hearts are full, poor dears, no room for observation and attention, the two parents of memory; and indeed the happiest people, as far as my acquaintance has gone, have had the retentive powers of mind in much the greatest perfection. Baretti said, you would be very angry because this dreadful event made us put off our Italian journey, but I know you better. Who knows even now that 'tis deferred for ever? Mr. Thrale says, he shall not die in peace without seeing Rome, and I am sure he will go no-where that he can help without you.

Let us try to heal our hearts first;—mine is always cracking again though, as soon as it begins to



to skin over; and Dr. Woodward gave me a very interesting and rational account of the effect grief has upon the heart this morning. When your mind is firmly fixed to one subject, said he, you forbear to draw your breath for several moments, and then repair the suspension by a long and deep sigh; this long continued checks the blood's course through the pulmonary artery, and gives the variation of the pulse which attends agitated and distressed minds; a cough succeeds, in consequence of the lungs being affected, while the heart gets concretions or collections of water in its pericardium—the bag which surrounds it, as I understand; so that our vulgar expression of sorrow breaking one's heart is founded on fact and nature. He told me too, that numberless patients die ultimately of grief—their exit being attributed to the immediate cause only, instead of the remote one. He has ordered my poor master and me to jump every morning into a cold bath; we have here a remarkably fine one. Meanwhile do not suspect me for being likely to provoke Heaven's judgments on my daughters, by fretting unnecessarily for the loss of my son. I feel ten times sonder of them than ever I felt before, and am desirous to live for their sake and their father's.

Pray bring or send us your cluster of political writings, for I love them dearly—not as political writings, but as vehicles for truth and sentiment on twenty, ay fifty subjects with which politicks have nothing to do.

Should you write about Streatham and Croydon, the book would be as good to me as a journey to Rome, exactly; for 'tis Johnson, not Falkland's islands, that interests us, and your style is invariably the same. The sight of Rome might have excited more reflections indeed than the sight  
of

of the Hebrides, and so the book might be bigger, but it would not be better a jct.

How does Dr. Taylor do? He was very kind I remember when my thunder-storm came first on, so was Count Manucci, so was Mrs. Montague, so was every body. The world is not guilty of much general harshness, nor inclined I believe to increase pain which they do not perceive to be deserved.—Baretti alone tried to irritate a wound so very deeply inflicted, and he will find few to approve his cruelty. Your friendship is our best cordial; continue it to us, dear Sir, and write very soon to

Your obliged and faithful servant.



L E T T E R CXLVII.

To MRS. T H R A L E.

DEAREST MADAM,

May 6, 1776.

ON Friday night, as you know, I left you about eleven o'clock. The moon shone, but I did not see much of the way, for I think I slept better than I commonly do in bed. My companions were civil men, and we dispatched our journey very peaceably. I came home at about seven on Saturday very little fatigued.

To-day I have been at home. To-morrow I am to dine, as I did yesterday, with Dr. Taylor. On Wednesday I am to dine with Oglethorpe; and on Thursday with Paoli. He that sees before him to his third dinner, has a long prospect.

VOL. I.

Q

My

My political tracts are printed, and I bring Mr. Thrale a copy when I come. They make but a little book.

Count Manucci is in such haste to come, that I believe he will not stay for me; if he would, I should like to hear his remarks on the road.

Mr. Baretti has a cold and hoarseness, and Mrs. Williams says that I have caught a cold this afternoon.

I am, &c.



## LETTER CXLVIII.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

May 11, 1776.

THAT you may have no superfluous uneasiness, I went this afternoon to visit the two babies at Kensington, and found them indeed a little spotted with their disorder, but as brisk and gay as health and youth can make them. I took a paper of sweetmeats, and spread them on the table. They took great delight to shew their governess the various animals that were made of sugar; and when they had eaten as much as was fit, the rest were laid up for to-morrow.

Susy sends her duty and love with great propriety. Sophy sends her duty to you, and her love to Queeney and Papa. Mr. Evans came in after me. You may set your heart quite at rest, no babies can be better than they appear to be. Dr. Taylor went with me, and we staid a good while. He likes them very much. Susy said her creed in French.

Dr.

Dr. Taylor says, I must not come back till his business is adjusted; and indeed it would not be wise to come away without doing what I came hither only to do. However, I expect to be dismissed in a few days, and shall bring Manucci with me.

I dined yesterday with \* \* \* \* \*. His three children are very lovely. \* \* \* \* \* longs to teach him a little economy. I know not how his money goes, for I do not think that Mrs. Williams and I had our due share of the nine guineas.

He begins to reproach himself with neglect of \* \* \* \* \*'s education, and censures that idleness, or that deviation, by the indulgence of which he has left uncultivated such a fertile mind. I advised him to let the child alone; and told him that the matter was not great, whether he could read at the end of four years or five, and that I thought it not proper to harass a tender mind with the violence of painful attention. I may perhaps procure both father and son a year of quiet; and surely I may rate myself among their benefactors.

I am, &c.



LETTER CXLIX.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR LADY,

May 14, 1776.

SINCE my visit to the younglings, nothing has happened but a little disappointment in Dr. Taylor's affairs, which, he says, must keep me here a while

while longer. Mr. Wedderburn has given his opinion to-day directly against us. He thinks of the claim much as I think. We sent this afternoon for a solicitor, another Scrase, who gave the same sentence with Wedderburn, and with less delicacy. The Doctor tried to talk him into better notions, but to little purpose, for a man is not much believed in his own cause. At last, finding the Doctor somewhat moody, I bid him not be disturbed, for he could not be injured till the death of Mrs. Rudd, and her life was better than his. So I *comforted and advised him*.

I know not how you intend to serve me, but I expect a letter to-morrow, and I do not see why Queeney should forget me.

Manucci must, I believe, come down without me. I am ashamed of having delayed him so long, without being able to fix a day; but you know, and must make him know, that the fault is not mine.

\* \* \* \* \* goes away on Thursday, very well satisfied with his journey. Some great men have promised to obtain him a place, and then a fig for my father and his new wife.

I have not yet been at the Borough, nor know when I shall go, unless you send me. There is in the exhibition of Exeter Exchange, a picture of the house at Streatham, by one Laurence, I think, of the Borough. This is something, or something like.

Mr. Welch sets out for France to-morrow, with his younger daughter. He has leave of absence for a year, and seems very much delighted with the thought of travelling, and the hope of health.

I am, &c.

L E T-

L E T T E R. CL.

TO MRS. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

May 16, 1776.

**T**HIS is my third letter. Well, sure I shall have something to-morrow. Our business stands still. The Doctor says I must not go; and yet my stay does him no good. His solicitor says he is sick, but I suspect he is fullen. The Doctor, in the mean time, has his head as full as yours at an election. Livings and preferments, as if he were in want with twenty children, run in his head. But a man must have his head on something, small or great.

For my part, I begin to settle and keep company with grave aldermen. I dined yesterday in the Poultry with Mr. Alderman Wilkes, and Mr. Alderman Lee, and Counsellor Lee, his brother. There sat you the while, so sober, with your W——s and your H——s, and my aunt and her turnspit; and when they are gone, you think by chance on Johnson, what is he doing? What should he be doing? He is breaking jokes with Jack Wilkes upon the Scots. Such, Madam, are the vicissitudes of things. And there was Mrs. Knowles, the Quaker, that works the futile pictures, who is a great admirer of your conversation. She saw you at Mr. Shaw's, at the election time. She is a Staffordshire woman, and I am to go and see her. Staffordshire is the nursery of art, here they grow up till they are transplanted to London.

Yet it is strange that I hear nothing from you; I hope you are not angry, or sick. Perhaps you are gone without me for spite to see places. That  
is

is natural enough, for evil is very natural, but I shall vex, unless it does you good.

Stevens seems to be connected with Tyrwhitt in publishing Chatterton's poems; he came very anxiously to know the result of our enquiries, and though he says he always thought them forged, is not well pleased to find us so fully convinced.

I have written to Matucci to find his own way, for the *law's delay* makes it difficult for me to guess when I shall be able to be, otherwise than by my inclination, Madam,

Your, &c.



#### LETTER CLI.

Mrs. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

DEAR SIR,

Bath, May 16, 1776.

I HAD no notion of your staying away from us so long; or you should not surely have wanted a letter; you might reasonably expect, and claim indeed my best thanks for the sweet visit paid five days ago to my babies: a most friendly action in you, and a most polite one in dear Dr. Taylor, and what I had never been hoping for. All unexpected pleasures are doubly precious.

*Grata superveniet quæ non sperabatur hora.*

When one has worn out one's fancy in anticipation of any event, the impression it makes must necessarily be weaker I suppose, and those pains, however piercing, for which we have time to prepare ourselves, do not break the constitution in

in pieces like a sudden shock that comes upon us unawares. I ought above all people to understand these matters from harsh experience of the severest sorrow. My mind, by the death of such a mother and of such a son, resembles a nation wasted by famine for three years together, and then shattered to final confusion by an earthquake.

Of past afflictions, however, we will now talk no longer. Mr. Thrale is recovering from his share of the distress, and it is my duty to accelerate, not retard, his return to cheerfulness and good-humour.

Dr. Taylor shall carry his cause. *I will have him carry it.* 'Tis a good cause probably; and if it is not, women (you tell me) never stop at integrity;—and as I understand the laws of friendship much better than I do the laws of Great Britain, will decide in a truly female manner, that he shall carry his cause—for this truly female reason—it was so very sweet in him to go and see my little girls.

Count Manucci would wait seven years to come with you; so do not disappoint the man, but bring him along with you. His delight in your company is like Boniface's exultation, when the 'squire speaks Latin; for understand you he certainly cannot. No flattery perhaps is more delicate however, or more pleasing than that of exciting admiration where one is not able to gratify curiosity; and all this nobleman desires is to count Johnson among his English friends when he returns to Florence, where I am told he stands very high for literature as well as birth.

We have a flashy friend here already, who is much your adorer; I wonder how you will like *him*? An Irishman he is; very handsome, very hot-headed, loud and lively, and sure to be a favourite with you, he tells us, for he can live  
with.



with a man of *ever so odd a temper*. My master laughs, but likes him, and it diverts me to think what you will do when he professes that he could clean shoes for you; that he could shed his blood for you; with twenty more extravagant flights——And you say, *I flatter!* *Upon my honour, Sir, and indeed now*, as Dr. C———l's phrase is, *I am but a twitter to him*.

Well! you hate Bath; and will be very uncomfortable when you come this time I believe; for, after all, I *must* be civil to my aunt, who is exceedingly kind to me; and I must dress and go out, and do like other people, or you will be first to censure and condemn me; more than that, our dear master, who cannot be quiet without you for a week, will be always infallibly on your side, and encourage long lectures about the fit of a cap, which you will not give me a minute to put on as it should be——So I see my fate before it arrives.——Come to Bath though, and at least convince yourself that we are not rioting in felicities from whence you are cruelly excluded. Surely, since we have known each other, I have been no proper object of envy.

Se a ciascun l'interno affanno  
 'Se leggesse in fronte scritto,  
 Quanti mai ch'invidia fanno,  
 Ci farebbono pietà!

And Dr. Young says what Metastasio sings you know, when he observes, that were the real feelings of every man exposed to the examination of his neighbours, one vice would be immediately eradicated, for envy then could be no longer found among the human race.

Do you recollect complaining once to me of flatulence, when I could really with difficulty sit to hear you for agony both of body and soul.—

I'm

I'm sure I recollect your kind recantation, when you confessed that it was like lamenting a scratched finger in his chamber, who, the day before, had broken both his legs.

Mr. Thrale, thank God, is very comfortably set up again. The last hard gale blew him almost down though; and I hardly hoped Bath would have been able to do so much; but he scorns the *black dog* now: he will swing him round and round soon as Smollet's heroes do, who in every alliterated novel, Roderick Random or Peregrine Pickle, are always employed by their author to kill a dog, when he means that they should strike the reader's fancy, and win his heart with their prowess. That man hated dogs I imagine, and certainly understood little about them, for he talks of a spaniel, *Sweetlips*, which is not a spaniel's name ever, but a hound's; she is so called from the music of her tongue in the chace; not Sweetlips for fondness, and because her master delights in kissing her, as he seems to think—I never heard so foolish a notion in my life.

Here is a long letter about nothing—Just such a one as you wanted I hope. Those which begin *Great Sir* have not been wanting, I'll answer for them. Did not some notion wander about the world lately of taking beggar's letters under consideration? We should produce a good number between your house and ours.

*A-propos*, poor \* \* \* \* \* does not to be sure excel in oratory, but in gratitude few exceed him. 'Tis such a dolorous dog, says my master, or I would buy some of his trumpery myself. Poor, poor creature! his disappointed hopes, present fears, and earnest of future misery, are too melancholy to be dwelt upon; but you and I have done our best for him, and there seems a fate on all he undertakes: yet when we saw him sit down in his  
own

own wretched apartment; possessed of one broken chair with arms to it,—and try to look magnificent—could one refrain from laughing? though we agreed too, that in the sight of superior beings he was not more ridiculous than a king upon his throne. One mite is like another mite to him that looks at both through a microscope.

Farewel, dear Sir, and expect a long letter from Queeney, though not quite as long as this from

Your ever faithful servant.

I'll make Mr. Thrale frank this letter *himself* for a fancy.



## LETTER CLII.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

May 18, 1776.

THEN you are neither sick nor angry. Don't let me be defrauded of Queeney's letter. Yesterday Seward was with me, and told me what he knew of you. All good. To-day I went to look into my places at the Borough. I called on Mr. Perkins in the counting-house. He crows and triumphs, as we go on we shall double our business. The best brown malt he can have laid in at thirty and sixpence, and great stores he purposes to buy. Dr. Taylor's business stagnates, but he resolves not to wait on it much longer. Surely I shall get down to you next week.

B——

B—— went away on Thursday night, with no great inclination to travel northward; but who can contend with destiny? He says, he has had a very pleasant journey. He paid another visit, I think, to \* \* \* \*, before he went home. He carries with him two or three good resolutions; I hope they will not mould upon the road? The letter you sent me was from Mr. Twisse, and the book, if any come, is Twisse's travels to Ireland, which you will, I hope, untie and read.

I enclose some of the powders, lest you should lose your patient by delay.

I am, &c.

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L E T T E R CLIII.

To MRS. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

May 22, 1776.

ON Friday and Saturday I dined with Dr. Taylor, who is in discontent, but resolved not to stay much longer to hear the opinions of lawyers who are all against him. Who can blame him for being weary of them?

On Sunday I dined at Sir Joshua's house on the hill, with the Bishop of St. Asaph. The dinner was good, and the Bishop is knowing and conversible. Yesterday at the Doctor's again—very little better—in the evening came in Dr. Crane, who enquired after you.

All this while \* \* \* \* is hurt only in his vanity. He thought he had supplanted Mrs. W——, and Mrs. W—— has found the means of defeating him. He really wanted nothing more than to have

have the power of bequeathing a reversion to Mr. G——'s son, who is very nearly related to W——. This purity of intention however he cannot prove; and the transaction in itself seems *pactum iniquum*. I do not think that he can, or indeed that he ought to prevail.

Woodward, I hear, is gone to Bristol, in deep dudgeon at Barret's declaration against Chatterton's productions. You have now only H——, whom you can only make a silent admirer. I hope my friend buzzes a little about you to keep me in your head, though I think I do my part pretty well myself; there are very few writers of more punctuality.

I wish Queeney joy of her new watch; and next time I write, intend myself the honour of directing my letter to her. Her hand is now very exact, and when use has made it free, may be very beautiful.

I am glad of Mr. Thrale's resolution to take up his *restes* \* in person. He is wise in keeping the trade in his own hands, and appearing on proper occasions as the principal agent. Every man has those about him who wish to sooth him into inactivity and delitescence, nor is there any semblance of kindness more vigorously to be repelled than that which voluntarily offers a vicarious performance of the tasks of life, and conspires with the natural love of ease against diligence and perseverance.

While

\* When the master brewer goes round to his victuallers once a year, in order to examine the state of the trade, and the stock left on the hands of the alehouse-keeper, the expression used in the profession is, *that he takes up his rests*; a word borrowed from the French, and means the remainder—*les rests*.

While I was holding my pen over the last period, I was called down to Father Wilks the Benedictine, and Father Brewer a Doctor of the Sorbon, who are come to England, and are now wandering over London. I have invited them to dine with me to-morrow. Father Cowley is well; and Mrs. Strickland is at Paris. More than this I have not yet learned. They stay, I think, here but a little time.

I have sent your last parcel of powders, and hope soon to come myself.

I am, &c.

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L E T T E R   CLIV.

T O M R.   T H R A L E .

D E A R   S I R ,

June 3, 1776.

**Y**O U are all, I suppose, now either at one home or the other, and all I hope well. My mistress writes as if she was afraid I should make too much haste to see her. Pray tell her that there is no danger. The lameness, of which I made mention in one of my notes, has improved to a very serious and troublesome fit of the gout. I creep about and hang by both hands. Johnny Wilcocks might be my running footman. I enjoy all the dignity of lameness. I receive ladies and dismiss them sitting. *Painful pre-eminence.*

Baretti is at last mentioned in one of the Reviews, but in a manner that will not give him  
much

much delight. They are neither angry nor civil.

Catcot has been convinced by Barret, and has written his recantation to Tyrwhitt, who still persists in his edition of the poems, and perhaps is not much pleased to find himself mistaken.

You are now, I suppose, busy about your *restes*; I heartily wish you, dear Sir, a happy perambulation, and a good account of the trade; and hope that you and my mistress, as you come by, will call upon, Sir,

Your, &c.

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## LETTER CLV.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

June 4, at night.

THE world is indeed full of troubles, and we must not chuse for ourselves. But I am not sincerely sorry that in your present state of mind you are going to be immediately a mother. Compose your thoughts, diversify your attention, and attend your health.

If I can be of any use, send for me; I think I can creep to the end of the court, and climb into a coach, though perhaps not very easily; but if you call me, very willingly. If you do not send for me, let me, pray let me know as oft as you can how you do.

I am

I am glad that my master is at his *restes*, they will help to fill up his mind.

Pray let me know often how you do.

I am, dearest Lady,

Your, &c.



L E T T E R CLVI.

To MRS. THRALE.

DEAREST LADY,

June 5, 1776.

YOU will have a note which I wrote last night. I was thinking, as I lay awake, that you might be worse; but I hope you will be every moment better and better. I have never had any overpowering pain, nor been kept more awake than is usual to me; but I am a very poor creeper upon the earth, catching at any thing with my hands to spare my feet. In a day or two I hope to be as fit for Streatham as for any other place. Mr. Thrale it seems called last night when I was in bed, and yet I was not in bed till near twelve, for I sit up lest I should not sleep. He must keep well, for he is the pillar of the house; and you must get well, or the house will hardly be worth propping.

I am, dearest, Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T-



## LETTER CLVII.

TO MRS. THRALE.

MY DEAR LADY,

June 6.

**H**OW could you so mistake me? I am very desirous that the whole business should be as you would have it, only cheerfulness at that time is reckoned a good thing.

My feet grow better, and I hope, if you send a carriage, to mount it on Monday. This gout has a little depressed me, not that I have suffered any great pain; I have been teized rather than tormented; but the tediousness and the imbecillity have been unpleasant. However I now recover strength, and do not yet despair of kicking the moon.

Could not you send me something out of your garden? Things have been growing, and you have not been consuming them. I wish I had a great bunch of asparagus for Sunday.

Take great care of our Queeney, and of yourself, and encourage yourself in bustle, and variety, and cheerfulness. I will be ready to come as soon as I can, but the pain is now twinging me. Let me know, my sweetest lady, very often how you do. I thought it late before I heard to-day.

I am, dear Madam,

Your, &c.

LET-

LETTER CLVIII.

TO. MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

June 8.

**M**Y feet disappointed me last night; I thought they would have given me no disturbance, but going up stairs I fancy fretted them, and they would not let me be easy. On Monday I am afraid I shall be a poor walker, but well enough to talk, and to hear you talk. And then, you know, what care we?

Mr. Norton called on me yesterday. He is at Sayer's print-shop in Fleet-street; and would take an invitation to dinner very kindly.

Poor Mr. Levet has fallen down, and hurt himself dangerously.

Of the monks I can give no account. I had them to dinner, and gave each of them the *Political Tracts*, and furnished Wilkes with letters, which will, I believe, procure him a proper reception at Oxford.

I am, dearest Lady,

Your, &c.

## LETTER CLIX.

To MRS. THRALE.

Wednesday, Jan. 15, one in the morning, 1777.

*OMNIVM rerum vicissitudo.* The night after last Thursday was so bad, that I took ipecacuanha the next day. The next night was no better. On Saturday I dined with Sir Joshua. The night was such as I was forced to rise and pass some hours in a chair, with great labour of respiration. I found it now time to do something, and went to Dr. Lawrence, and told him I would do what he should order, without reading the prescription. He sent for a chirurgeon and took about twelve ounces of blood, and in the afternoon I got sleep in a chair.

At night, when I came to lie down after trial of an hour or two, I found sleep impracticable, and therefore did what the Doctor permitted in a case of distress; I rose, and opening the orifice, let out about ten ounces more. Frank and I were but awkward; but, with Mr. Levet's help, we stopped the stream, and I lay down again, though to little purpose; the difficulty of breathing allowed no rest. I slept again in the day-time, in an erect posture. The Doctor has ordered me a second bleeding, which I hope will set my breath at liberty. Last night I could lie but a little at a time.

Yet I do not make it a matter of much form. I was to-day at Mrs. Gardiner's. When I have bled to-morrow, I will not give up Langton, nor Paradise. But I beg that you will fetch me away on Friday. I do not know but

but clearer air may do me good; but whether the air be clear or dark, let me come to you.

I am, &c.

To sleep, or not to sleep—



LETTER CLX.

TO MRS. THRALE.

MADAM,

March 19, 1777.

BE pleased to procure the bearer credit for a linen gown, and let her bring the bill to me.

Did you stay all night at Sir Joshua's? and keep Miss up again? Miss Owen had a fight—all the Burkes—the Harris's—Miss Reynolds—what has she to see more? and Mrs. Horneck, and Miss.

You are all young, and gay, and easy; but I have miserable nights, and know not how to make them better; but I shift pretty well a-days, and so have at you all at Dr. Burney's to-morrow.

I never thought of meeting you at Sir Joshua's, nor knew that it was a great day. But things, as sages have observed, happen unexpectedly; and you thought little of seeing me this fortnight except to-morrow. But go where you

R 2

will

will, and see if I do not catch you. When I am away, every body runs away with you, and carries you among the grifettes, or whither they will. I hope you will find the want of me twenty times before you see me.

I am, &c.



### LETTER CLXI.

To MR. THRALE.

DEAR SIR,

April 9, 1777.

**T**HIS is a letter of pure congratulation. I congratulate you.

1. That you are alive.
2. That you have got my mistress fixed again after her excentricities.
3. That my mistress has added to her conquests the Prince of Castiglione.
4. That you will not be troubled with me till to-morrow, when I shall come with \* \* \* \*.
5. That \* \* \* \* will go away in the evening.

I am, &c.

L E T-

LETTER CLXII.

TO MRS. THRALE.

MADAM,

May 19, 1777.

I HAVE written to Dr. Taylor, you may be sure, but the business is pretty much out of the Doctor's way. His acquaintance with the Lord Cavendishes, he barely knows the young Duke and Dutchess. He will be proud to shew that he can do it; but he will hardly try, if he suspects any danger of refusal.

You will become such a gadder, that you will not care a penny for me. However, you are wise in wishing to know what life is made of; to try what are the pleasures which are so eagerly sought, and so dearly purchased. We must know pleasure before we can rationally despise it. And it is not desirable that when you are, with matronal authority, talking down juvenile hopes and maiden passions, your hearers should tell you, like Miss P——, "You never saw a *fête*."

That you may see this show I have written, because I am, Madam,

Your most humble servant.

L E T.

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LETTER CLXIII.

TO MR. THRALE.

DEAR SIR,

July 31, 1777.

I CAME hither on Monday, and find every thing much as I expected. I shall not stay long, but if you send any letters to me on Saturday, to University College, I shall receive them. Please to make my compliments to my mistress and Queeney. I have picked up some little information for my Lives at the library. I know not whether I shall go forward without some regret. I cannot break my promise to Boswell and the rest; but I have a good mind to come back again.

I am, &c.

LETTER CLXIV.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

August 4, 1777.

I DID not mean to express much discontent nor any ill-humour in my letter. When I went away I knew that I went partly because I had talked of going, and because I was a little restless. I have been searching the library for materials for my Lives, and a little I have got.

Things

Things have not gone quite well with poor Gwynne. His work was finished so ill that he has been condemned to pay three hundred pounds for damages, and the sentence is considered as very mild. He has however not lost his friends, and is still in the best houses, and at the best tables.

I shall enquire about the harvest when I come into a region where any thing necessary to life is understood. I do not believe that there is yet any great harm, if the weather should now mend. Reaping time will only be a little later than is usual.

Dr. Wetherell is abroad, I think at London; Mr. Coulson is here, and well. Every body that knows you, enquires after you.

Boswell's project is disconcerted, by a visit from a relation of Yorkshire, whom he mentions as the head of his clan. Boszy, you know, makes a huge bustle about all his own motions, and all mine. I have inclosed a letter to pacify him, and reconcile him to the uncertainties of human life.

I believe it was after I left your house, that I received a pot of orange marmalade from Mrs. Boswell. We have now, I hope, made it up. I have not opened my pot.

I have determined to leave Oxford to-morrow, and on Tuesday hope to see Lichfield, where I mean to rest till Dr. Taylor fetches me to Ashbourne, and there I am likely enough to stay till you bid me come back to London.

I am, &c.

L E T.



## LETTER CLXV.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

Lichfield, August 7, 1777.

ON Tuesday I left Oxford, and came to Birmingham. Mr. Hector is well; Mrs. Careless was not at home. Yesterday I came hither. Mrs. Porter is well. Mrs. Aston, to whom I walked before I sat down, is very ill, but better. Whether she will recover I know not. If she dies I have a great loss. Mr. Green is well; and Mrs. Adey; more I have not yet seen. At Birmingham I heard of the death of an old friend, and at Lichfield of the death of another. *Anni prædantur euntes*. One was a little older, the other a little younger than myself.

But amidst these privations the present must still be thought on, we must act as if we were to live. My barber, a man not unintelligent, speaks magnificently of the harvest; and Frank, whom I ordered to make his observations, noted fields of very fine shew as we passed along.

Lucy thinks nothing of my prologue for Kelly, and says she has always disowned it. I have not let her know my transactions with Dr. Dodd. She says, she takes Miss's correspondence very kindly.

I am, &amp;c.

LET.

L E T T E R CLXVI.

To MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

Lichfield, August 9, 1777.

**N**O great matter has happened since I wrote, but this place grows more and more barren of entertainment. Two whom I hoped to have seen are dead. I think that I am much more unwieldy and inert than when I was here last; my nights are very tedious. But a light heart, &c.

Lucy said, "When I read Dr. Dodd's sermon to the prisoners I said, Dr. Johnson could not make a better."

One of Lucy's maids is dreadfully tormented by the tænia, or long-worm. She has taken many medicines without effect, and it is much wished that she could have the Knightsbridge powder. I will pay for it, if you, dear Madam, will be so kind as to procure it, and send it with directions. Can it be franked? If it cannot, the best way will be to unite it with something of greater bulk. I have promised Lucy to give her Cook's last voyage, for she loves prints; but the last voyage cannot be well understood without some knowledge of the former. If you will lend us Hawkesworth's books, they shall be carefully returned. If you will do this for us, the powders may be easily put up with the books.

Please to make my compliments to Master, and to Queeney.

I am, &c.

L E T-

## L E T T E R   CLXVII.

To MRS. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Lichfield, August 13, 1777.

SUCH tattle as filled your last sweet letter prevents one great inconvenience of absence, that of returning home a stranger and an enquirer. The variations of life consist of little things. Important innovations are soon heard, and easily understood. Men that meet to talk of physics or metaphysics, or law or history, may be immediately acquainted. We look at each other in silence, only for want of petty talk upon slight occurrences. Continue therefore to write all that you would say.

You have Lord Westcote and every body when I am away, and you go to Mr. Cator's, and you are so happy.

Miss Turton and Harry Jackson are dead. Mrs. Aston is, I am afraid, in great danger. Mr. Green, Mr. Garrick, and Mr. Newton are all well. I have been very faint and breathless since I came hither, but fancy myself better this day. I hope Master's walk will be finished when I come back, and I shall perambulate it very often.

There seems to be in this country scarcely any fruit, there never indeed was much; but great things have been said of the harvest, and the only fear is of the weather. It rains here almost every day.

I dined yesterday with the corporation, and talked against a workhouse which they have in *contemplation*—there's the word now. I do not know that they minded me, for they said nothing to me.

I have

I have had so little inclination to motion that I have always gone the shortest way to Stowhill, and hardly any where else, so that I can tell you nothing new of Green's museum, but I design to visit him, and all friends.

I hope for a letter to-morrow, for you must not forget that I am, Madam,

Your most humble servant.

P. S. Why cannot Queeney write?



L E T T E R CLXVIII.

TO MRS. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Lichfield, August 23, 1777.

AT Lichfield? Yes; but not well. I have been trying a great experiment with ipecacuanha, which Akenfyde had inclined me to consider as a remedy for all constrictions of the breast. Lawrence indeed told me that he did not credit him, and no credit can I find him to deserve. One night I thought myself the better for it, but there is no certainty. On Wednesday night I took ten grains; the night again was restless. On Friday night I took twenty grains, which Akenfyde mentions as the utmost that on these occasions he has *ventured* to give; the night was perhaps rather worse. I shall therefore take truce with ipecacuanha. Tell me, if you can, what I shall do next.

Mr.

Mr. Thrale's heart may be at rest. It is not fine Mrs. Anne that has been caught by the tænia, but Mrs. Anne tumbled down stairs last night, and bruised her face. Both maid and mistress are very grateful to you for the kindness with which you procured the powders, and directed their use. They have not yet been tried. It has been washing week; and I suppose every body shrinks a little from such rough remedies, of which at last the success is doubtful. However it will, I think, be tried in all its formalities.

My master may plant and dig till his pond is an ocean, if he can find water, and his parterre a down. I have no doubt of a most abundant harvest; and it is said that the produce of barley is particularly great. We are not far from the great year of a hundred thousand barrels, which, if three shillings be gained upon each barrel, will bring us fifteen thousand pounds a-year. \* \* \* \* \* never pretended to more than thirty pounds a-day, which is not eleven thousand a-year. But suppose we shall get but two shillings a barrel, that is ten thousand a-year. I hope we still have the advantage. Would you for the other thousand have my master such a man as \* \* \* \* \* ?

I shewed dear Queeney's letter to Mrs. Aston and Mrs. Porter, they both took her remembrance of them very kindly.

It was well done by Mr. Brooke to send for you. His house is one of my favourite places. His water is very commodious, and the whole place has the true old appearance of a little country town. I hope Miss goes, for she takes notice.

The races are next week. People seem to be weary of them, for many go out of town I suppose to escape the cost of entertaining company.

Dr.  


Dr. Taylor will probably come, and probably take me away; and I shall leave Mrs. Afton.

Do not you lose, nor let Master lose, the kindness that you have for me. Nobody will ever love you both better than, dear Madam,

**Your, &c.**



LETTER CLXIX.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

**Lichfield, August 27, 1772.**

OUR correspondence is not so vigorous as it used to be; but now you know the people at Lichfield, it is vain to describe them, and as no revolutions have happened, there is nothing to be said about them. We have a new Dean, whose name is Proby; he has the manners of a gentleman, and some spirit of discipline, which brings the cathedral into better method. He has a lady that talks about Mrs. Montague and Mrs. Carter.

On next Saturday I go to Ashbourne, and thither must my letters be sent, if you are pleased ever to write to me.

When I came hither I could hardly walk, but I have got better breath, and more agility. I intend to perambulate Master's dominions every day at least once. But I have miserable, distressful, tedious nights; do you think they will mend at Brighthelmstone?

When I come to Ashbourne I will send my  
~~dear~~ Queeney an account how I find things,  
for

for I hope she takes an interest in Dr. Taylor's prosperity.

This is race week; but Mrs. Aston, Mrs. Porter, and myself have no part in the course, or at the ball. We all sit at home, and perhaps pretend to wonder that others go, though I cannot charge any of us with much of that folly. Mrs. Gastrel, who wraps her head in a towel, is very angry at the present mode of dress and feathers.

But amidst all these little things, there is one great thing. The harvest is abundant, and the weather *à la merveille*. No season ever was finer. Barley, malt, beer, and money. There is the series of ideas. The deep logicians call it a *so-rites*. I hope my master will no longer endure the reproach of not keeping me a horse.

The puppies played us a vile trick when they tore my letter, but I hope my loss will be repaired to-morrow. You are in the way of business and intelligence, and have something to write. I am here in unactive obscurity, and have little other pleasure than to perceive that the poor languishing lady is glad to see me. I hope, dearest Lady, you will be glad to see me too; and that it will be long before disease lays hold upon you.

I am, dear Madam,

Your, &c.

## LETTER CLXX.

To MRS. THRALE.

DEAREST LADY,

Sept. 6, 1777.

IT is true that I have loitered, and what is worse, loitered with very little pleasure. The time has run away, as most time runs, without account, without use, and without memorial. But to say this of a few weeks, though not pleasing, might be borne, but what ought to be the regret of him who, in a few days, will have so nearly the same to say of sixty-eight years? But complaint is vain.

If you have nothing to say from the neighbourhood of the metropolis, what can occur to me in little cities and petty towns; in places which we have both seen, and of which no description is wanted? I have left part of the company with which you dined here, to come and write this letter; in which I have nothing to tell, but that my nights are very tedious. I cannot persuade myself to forbear trying something.

As you have now little to do, I suppose you are pretty diligent at the Thraliana, and a very curious collection posterity will find it. Do not remit the practice of writing down occurrences as they arise, of whatever kind, and be very punctual in annexing the dates. Chronology you know is the eye of history; and every man's life is of importance to himself. Do not omit painful casualties, or unpleasing passages; they make the variegation of existence; and there are many transactions,



actions, of which I will not promise with *Æneas*, *et hæc olim meminisse juvabit*. Yet that remembrance which is not pleasant may be useful. There is however an intemperate attention to slight circumstances which is to be avoided, lest a great part of life be spent in writing the history of the rest. Every day perhaps has something to be noted, but in a settled and uniform course few days can have much.

Why do I write all this, which I had no thought of when I began? The Thraliana drove it all into my head. It deserves however an hour's reflection, to consider how, with the least loss of time, the loss of what we wish to retain may be prevented.

Do not neglect to write to me, for when a post comes empty, I am really disappointed.

Boswell, I believe, will meet me here.

I am dearest Lady,

Your, &c.



## L E T T E R   C L X X I .

T O   M R S .   T H R A L E .

DEAR MADAM,

Ashbourne, Sept. 8, 1777,

SURELY the same vexatious interruption of our correspondence happens now that happened once when I was at Oxford. I write often, yet you seem not to have my letters. I charged Frank with trusting some other hand to the post-office,  
this

this he denies; and indeed I have answers to other letters.

I came hither on Saturday, August 30th. The books were not then come; but I suppose, according to Davies's letter, they came that evening. Of the receipt of the powders I wrote word, and told that the girl delayed a little while to take them. From this place I wrote to Miss last Thursday, and to you last Saturday. Nothing has been mentioned by you of which I have not taken proper notice, except that I have said nothing of  
\* \* \* \* \*

Many instances there are of the vanity of human solicitude, and it is not strange to find another. We were all planning out for him some mode of life, and disease was hovering over him. If he dies, his mother will lose what has engaged her care, and incited her vanity. The son and his estate go away together. But life occupies us all too much to leave us room for any care of others beyond what duty enjoins; and no duty enjoins sorrow or anxiety that is at once troublesome and useless. I would readily help the poor lady, but if I cannot do her good by assisting her, I shall not disturb myself by lamenting her: yet I suppose his death will be as hard a blow as is commonly felt. Let me know if you hear how he goes on. I go on but uneasily.

I am in hopes of seeing Mr. Boswell, and then he may perhaps tell me something to write, for this is but a barren place. Not a mouse stirring.

I am, &c.

## L E T T E R    CLXXII.

To MRS. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Ashbourne, Sept. 13, 1777.

**N**OW I write again, having just received your letter dated the 10th.

You must not let foolish fancies take hold on your imagination. If Queeney grows tall, she is sufficiently bulky, and as much out of danger of a consumption as nature allows a young maiden to be. Of real evils the number is great, of possible evils there is no end. \* \* \* \* \* is really to be pitied. Her son in danger; the estate likely to pass not only from her, but to those on whom, I suppose, she would least wish it bestowed, and her system of life broken, are very heavy blows. But she will at last be rich, and will have much gratification in her power, both rational and sensual.

Boswell, I believe, is coming. He talks of being here to-day. I shall be glad to see him. But he shrinks from the Baltic expedition, which I think is the best scheme in our power. What we shall substitute, I know not. He wants to see Wales, but except the woods of Bachycraigh what is there in Wales? What that can fill the hunger of ignorance, or quench the thirst of curiosity? We may perhaps form some scheme or other, but, in the phrase of Hockley in the Hole, it is pity he has not a better bottom.

Tell my young mistress that this day's letter is too short, and it brings me no news either foreign or domestick.

I am

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 259

I am going to dine with Mr. Dyot, and Frank tells sternly, that it is past two o'clock.

I am, dearest Madam,

Your, &c.

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LETTER CLXXIII.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

Sept. 15, 1777.

DO you call this punctual correspondence? There was poor I writing, and writing, and writing, on the 8th, on the 11th, on the 13th; and on the 15th I looked for a letter, but I may look and look. Instead of writing to me you are writing the Thraliana. But—he *must be humble who would please.*

Last night came Boswell. I am glad that he is come. He seems to be very brisk and lively, and laughs a little at \* \* \* \* \*. I told him something of the scene at Richmond. You find, now you have seen the *progenies Langtoniana*, that I did not praise them without reason; yet the second girl is my favourite.

You talk of pine-apples and venison. Pine-apples it is sure we have none; but venison, no forester that lived under the green-wood-tree ever had more frequently upon his table. We fry, and roast, and bake, and devour in every form.

We have at last fair weather in Derbyshire, and every where the crops are spoken of as un-

commonly exuberant. Let us now get money and save it. All that is paid is saved, and all that is laid out in land or malt. But I long to see twenty thousand pounds in the bank, and to see my master visiting this estate and that, as purchases are advertised. But perhaps all this may be when Colin's forgotten and gone. Do not let me be forgotten before I am gone, for you will never have such another, as,

Dearest dear Madam,

Your most humble servant.



LETTER CLXXIV.

To MRS. T. H. R. A L E.

DEAR MADAM,      Ashbourne, Sept. 18, 1777.

**H**ERE is another birth-day. They come very fast. I am now sixty-eight. To lament the past is vain; what remains is to look for hope in futurity. Queeney has now passed another year. I hope every year will bring her happiness.

Boswell is with us in good-humour; and plays his part with his usual vivacity. We are to go in the Doctor's vehicle and dine at Derby to-morrow.

Do you know any thing of Bolt-court? Invite Mr. Levet to dinner, and make enquiry what family he has, and how they proceed. I had a letter lately from Mrs. Williams. Dr. Lewis visits her, and has added ipecacuanha to her bark: but

I do

I do not hear much of her amendment. Age is a very stubborn disease. Yet Levet sleeps sound every night. I am sorry for poor Seward's pain; but he may live to be better.

Mr. \* \* \* \* \*s erection of an urn looks like an intention to bury me alive; I would as willingly see my friend, however benevolent and hospitable, quietly inurned. Let him think for the present of some more acceptable memorial.

Does nobody tell \* \* \* \* \* that a warmer climate and a clearer air is likely to help her son, and that it may be convenient to run away from an English winter, before he becomes too weak for travel? It appears to me not improbable that change of air, and the amusement and exercise of easy journeys, might enable one so young to overcome his disease.

Dr. Taylor has another buck. You must not talk to us of venison. Fruit indeed we have little, and that little not very good; but what there is has been very liberally bestowed.

Mr. L—— and the Doctor still live on different sides of the street.

We have had, for some time past, such harvest weather as a Derbyshire farmer dares scarcely hope. The harvest has this year been every where a month backward, but so far as I can hear, has recompensed the delay by uncommon plenty. Next year, will, I hope, complete Mr. Thrale's wish of an hundred thousand barrels. Ambition is then to have an end, and he must remember, that *non minor est virtus quam quærere, parva tueri*. When he has climbed so high, his care must be to keep himself from falling.

I am, dear Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T.

## LETTER CLXXV.

MRS. THRALE to DR. JOHNSON.

DEAR SIR,

Sept. 18.

I HAVE got some news that will please you now. Here is an agreeable friend come from Paris, whom you were very fond of when we were there—the Prior of our English Benedictine Convent, Mr. Cowley. I did not know him again; so much was he altered by the change of dress. How capricious and absurd one is always! I feel longing to call him *Father* Prior now; and upon the continent my scruple hindered me from using an appellation clearly and absolutely prohibited by our Saviour's own words in the gospel. The same objection however would again return if I was out of England again; but here, where one knows such words carry no meaning of more serious import, I long to call him *Father* Prior for fondness. He enquires much for you; and says, Wilkes is very well, N<sup>o</sup> 45, as they call him in the Convent. A cell is always kept ready for your use, he tells me; so when your cruel mistress turns you out, no harm will come of it; and when Mr. Thrale dismisses me, I am to take refuge among the Austin Nuns, and study Virgil with dear Miss Canning.

Mr. Cowley is as pleasant company as ever. We asked Lord Mulgrave to meet him, and he said a thing so like a thing of your saying, that I will repeat it directly. We talked of England and France—The beds are softer there than here, quoth my master. Softer, if you will, but not so clean, Sir, replied the Prior.—No, no, dirty enough to be sure, confessed Mr. Thrale, but exceeding

ceeding soft. Why then, interrupts Lord Mulgrave, one may infer, that a hog in England lives just like a gentleman in France I find——so there let the parallel rest. Now was not that speech quite in the spirit of our dear Mr. Johnson?—I think it will be carried about the town for yours sometime.

My husband bids me tell you that he examined the register, and that Lever is only seventy-two years old.

I hope your illness was but slight; I heard of it by mere accident, and believed but little; you have much of my incredulity to answer for, by perpetually detecting every body in falsehood &c. Let this report, however, though not true, introduce a lecture on general caution; and a request that you will not strive to torture that iron constitution of yours quite to ruin, because you have nothing else to do. It were better bind books again, as you did one year in our thatched summer-house, than weigh out doses of mercury and opium which are not wanted, and then complain that you are *hermetically sealed*. Very comical you are sure enough; but 'tis better play droll tricks with any thing else than with one's health. Were we not all justly enraged at that wretched fellow for trying experiments on our business? and now you will have a stroke at the next valuable possession we have.

Something always happens when you go to Lichfield; and our sitting down thirteen to table yesterday made my fool's nerves flutter for Queeney. Her father and I were of no consequence one would think, or I might have thought of ourselves, but Mr. Murphy said, she had a hectic colour, and her first cousin \* \* \* \* \* is now absolutely dying of a consumption, and I can't quiet my fears somehow, though I know them to be ground-



groundless.—*Can you tell how to controul thinking fancies?* Ah! dear Sir, do pray try to govern your own, and do not take phytick for *fun*.

Well! we will have no more superstition *just now* if you please, because if one escapes this birth-day time, the rest of the year is less dangerous; we are on the watch always about this week of September—you for yourself, and I for Hester. Superstition is that which *superstet*, is not it? and then I do think we have all due claim to the honour of being very superstitious, for we make much more ado than is necessary sure.

Come, here is news of Town-malling—the quiet old-fashioned place in Kent, that you liked so because it was agreeable to your own notions of a rural life; I believe we were the first people, except the master of it, who had for many years taken delight in the old coach without springs, the two roasted ducks in one dish, the fortified flower garden, and fir trees cut in figures.—A spirit of innovation has however reached even these at last.—The roads are mended; no more narrow shaded lanes, but clear open turnpike trotting. A yew hedge, or an eugh hedge if you will, newly cut down too by his nephew's delire. Ah those nephews! And a wall pulled away, which bore incomparable fruit—to *call in the country*—is the phrase. Mr. Thrale is wicked enough to urge on these rough reformers; how it will end I know not. For your comfort, the square canals still drop into one another; and the chocolate is still made in the room by a maid, who curtsies as she presents every cup. Dear old Daddy Brooke looks well and handsome at eighty-one years old; while I saw his sister, who is ninety-four years old, and calls him *Frankey*, eat more venison at a sitting than Mr. Thrale. These are the proper contemplations of this season. May my daughter and my friend but enjoy life as long,  
and

and use it as innocently as these sweet people have done. The sight of such a family consoles one's heart.

I am glad the Richmond scene diverted you; my master laughed when I read it over to him; but here is nothing to tell but what has been often repeated. Our Paris friends are melancholy I hear, and Madame de Bocages laments her state of low spirits; is there any foundation for the idea prevalent among us, that we are the only nation where hypocondriac diseases are frequent, and that the French are almost wholly free? You are not willing to believe with the herd in that particular I dare say; yet when a man is sick, you are always sending him to the continent,—I never can think for what;—he had better die at home; and the foreigners only get a notion of England's being unwholesome by seeing such consumptive looking creatures come out of it as flock to Nice, Montpellier, &c. I dare say they think we are all so; and you may remember the French ladies wondering at my healthy looks—which I shall never get again.

So adieu, dear Sir, and be content with this long volume of a letter from

Your truly faithful servant,

H. L. THRALE.

How could I write so much? and from Streat-ham? I admire at my own skill in spinning out so. Mr. Thrale is cured of his passion for Lady R—already.

L E T.

## L E T T E R    C L X X V I .

To MRS. T H R A L E .

DEAR MADAM,

Ashbourne, Sept. 20, 1777.

I DO not remember what has happened that you write on mourning paper, and use black wax.

B—— liked S—— better as he knew him more, and seems well pleased to be remembered by him and my master.

Pretty dear Queeney! I wish her many and many happy birth-days. I hope you will never lose her, though I should go to Lichfield, and though she should sit the thirteenth in many a company.

You have nothing to say because you live at Streatham, and expect me to say much when I return from Lichfield and Ashbourne, places to be considered as abounding in novelty, and supplying every hour materials for history. It is as much as I can do to furnish every post with a letter; I keep nothing behind for oral communication.

I took Boswell yesterday to see Keddlestone, and the silk mills, and the china work at Derby; he was pleased with all. The Derby china is very pretty, but I think the gilding is all superficial; and the finer pieces are so dear, that perhaps silver vessels of the same capacity may be sometimes bought at the same price; and I am not yet so infected with the china-fancy, as to like any thing at that rate which can so easily be broken.

Master is very inconstant to Lady R——. Did he not hold out against forty such repellents from Mrs. P——? He grows nice I find; let him try whether nicety will make him happy.

Boswell

Boswell has spent more money than he expected, and I must supply him with part of his expences home. I have not much with me, and beg Master to send me by the next post a note of ten pounds, which I will punctually return, not in opportunities of beneficence, though the noblest payment in the world, but in money, or bank-paper. Do not let him forget me.

Do not suppose that I wrote this letter on purpose to borrow. *My soul disdains it.* I did not think on it when I began to write. When I miss a post, I consider myself as deviating from the true rule of action. Seeing things in *this light*, I consider every letter as something in *the line* of duty; upon *this foot* I make my arrangement, and under whatever circumstances of difficulty, endeavour to carry them into execution; for having in some degree *pledged myself* for the performance, I think the resolution both of my head and my heart engaged, and *reprobate* every thought of desisting from the undertaking.

Howel tells of a few words in Spanish, the true utterance of which will denominate the speaker *bueno Romanciadore*, the last sentence will *un buen politico*. He that can rattle those words well together may say all that political controversy generally produces.

I am, &c.

P. S. Nay, but do enquire after Bolt-court.

## L E T T E R      CLXXVII.

To MRS.      T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Ashbourne, Sept. 22, 1777.

**N**OW to sit down to tell me a long newspaper story about Lord Harcourt and his dog.—I hoped when you had seen Levet you would have learned something that concerned me.

I hope Master has been so kind as to fend me the ten pounds, else I shall be forced to borrow at Ashbourne or Lichfield.

Boswell has been this morning with me to see Ham Garden. He talks of going away this week, and I shall not think of staying here much longer, though the wind whistles very prettily. My nights are still such as I do not like; but complaint will not mend them.

If \* \* \* \* \* holds life to one-and-twenty, he will probably live on; for his constitution, if it does not grow weaker, will become firmer.

The harvest in Staffordshire has been such for plenty, and so well gathered, as to be mentioned with admiration. Make your most of these golden years, and buy liberally what will now be liberally allowed. I hope to partake a little of the general abundance—But I am now sixty-eight. Make good use, my dear Lady, of your days of health and sprightliness. Sixty-eight is coming fast upon you;—let it not find you wondering what has become of all the past.

If Aunt comes now, she can do but little harm, for she will hardly go with you to Brighthelmstone, and she cannot long trouble you at Streat-ham.

I hope

I hope soon to come to Lichfield, and from Lichfield to London.

Taylor and Bos. send their compliments with those of, Madam,

Your most humble servant.

---

L E T T E R CLXXVIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Ashbourne, Sept. 25, 1777.

BOSWELL is gone; and is, I hope, pleased that he has been here; though to look on any thing with pleasure is not very common. He has been gay and good-humoured in his usual way, but we have not agreed upon any other expedition. He had spent more money than he intended, and I supplied him; and my deficiencies are again made up by Mr. Thrale's bill, for which I thank him.

I will send directions to the taylor to make me some cloaths according to Mr. Thrale's direction, though I cannot go with you to Brighthelmstone, having loitered away the time I know not how; but if you would have me, I will endeavour to follow you, which upon the whole may perhaps be as well. I am here now on the 25th, and am obliged by promise to take Lichfield in my way, so that the 30th will come upon me too soon.

The Levet that has been found in the register must be some other Levet; I dare say our friend does not in his heart believe that it is he.

I am

I am glad that the Benedictines found you at last. Father Wilkes, when he was amongst us, took Oxford in his way. I recommended him to Dr. Adams, on whom he impressed a high opinion of his learning. I am glad that my cell is reserved. I may perhaps some time or other visit it, though I cannot easily tell why one should go to Paris twice. Our own beds are soft enough. Yet my master will tell you, that one wants to be doing something. I have something like a longing to see my master's performances; a pleasure which I shall hardly have till he returns from Brighthelmston. I beg that before you go, you will send the *Bibliographia Britannica* to my habitation.

I am, &c.

P. S. Let your next be sent to Lichfield.

## LETTER CLXXIX.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

Ashbourne, Sept. 27, 1777.

I THINK I have already told you that Bol. is gone. The day before he went, we met the Duke and Dutchess of Argyle in the street, and went to speak to them while they changed horses; and in the afternoon Mrs. Langton and Juliet stopped in their way to London, and sent for me; I went to them, and sent for Bolwell, whom Mrs. Langton had never seen.

And

And so, here is this post without a letter. I am old, I am old, says Sir John Falstaff. "Take heed, my dear, youth flies apace." You will be wanting a letter sometime. I wish I were with you, but I cannot come yet.

————Nives et frigora Rheni

Me sine sola vides: Ah, ne te frigora lædant!

Ah, tibi ne teneras glacies secet aspera plantas!

ECL. X.

I wish you well; B—— and all; and shall be glad to know your adventures. Do not however think wholly to escape me; you will, I hope, see me at Brighthelmston. Dare you answer me, as Brutus answered his evil genius?

I know not when I shall write again, now you are going to the world's end. *Extra anni solisque vias*, where the post will be a long time in reaching you. I shall, notwithstanding all distance, continue to think on you, and to please myself with the hope of being once again,

M A D A M,

Your most humble servant.

L E T.



## LETTER CLXXX.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM, Ashbourne, Michaelmas-day, 1777.

AND so because you hear that Mrs. Desmoulines has written, you hold it not necessary to write; as if she could write like you, or I were equally content with hearing from her.—Call you this, backing your friends? She did write, and I remember nothing in her letter, but that she was discontented that I wrote only Madam to her, and Dear Madam to Mrs. Williams. Without any great dearness in the comparison, Williams is, I think, the dearer of the two. I am glad that she mends, but I am afraid she cannot get the start of the season, and Winter will come before she is prepared for it.

But at Streatham there are dears, and dears, who before this letter reaches them will be at Brighthelmstone. Wherever they be, may they have no uneasiness but for want of me.

Now you are gone, I wonder how long you design to stay; pray let me know when you write to Lichfield, for I have not lost hope of coming to you, yet that purpose may chance to fail. But my comfort is, that you cannot charge me with forgetting you when I am away. You perhaps do not think how eagerly I expect the post.

Mrs. \* \* \* \* \* grows old, and has lost much of her undulation and mobility. Her voice likewise is spoiled; she can come upon the stage now only for her own benefit. But Juliet is airy and cheerful, and has I hope done lamenting the inconstancy of man. My mistress is represented as unable to bear them company. There was not time for

for many questions, and no opportunity of winding and winding them, as Mr. Richardson has it, so as to get truth out without questions. I do not indeed know that I am any great winder. I suspect a winder to be always a man vacant, and commonly little-minded. I think my dear little mistress no great proficient at winding, though she could wind if she would, *contemnit potius quam nescit*.

Dr. Taylor desires always to have his compliments sent. He is, in his usual way, very busy; getting a bull to his cows, and a dog to his bitches. His waterfall runs very well. Old Shakespeare is dead, and he wants to buy another horse for his mares. He is one of those who find every hour *something new to wish or to enjoy*.

Boswell while he was here saw Keddleton and the silk mills, and took Chatsworth in his way home. He says, his wife does not love me quite well yet, though we have made a formal peace. He kept his journal very diligently; but then what was there to journalize? I should be glad to see what he says of \* \* \* \* \*. I think I told you that I took him to Ham.

Why should you suspect me of forgetting lilly lolly? Now you will see the Shellys, and perhaps hear something about the Cottons; and you will bathe, and walk, and dress, and dance, and who knows how little you will think on, Madam,

Your, &c.

## LETTER CLXXII.

MRS. THRALE to DR. JOHNSON.

DEAR SIR,

October 1, 1777.

IT was because you teized me so about Bolt-court intelligence, that I fancied Mrs. Desmoulines' letter would be as good, or better than mine; she was certainly more qualified than I could be, to write upon the subject. Her discontent is no new thing; if it proceeds from no new cause, she must bear without complaining, that which probably does not mend while she says nothing of the matter; but people will not endure to be teized for ever with fruitless lamentations for evils they cannot remove.

In some letter lately you wonder at my using black wax—for the paper was only not gilt—as if you had forgotten my numberless reasons for *mourning*, because you are not perpetually hearing me recall them to your memory. Affliction however is very good for us all I doubt not, or it would hardly be bestowed so liberally. The flower of an aloe tree is, I am told, so peculiarly sweet, that bees, best judges in such a case, seek it from an immense distance; we know how bitter the stem is, and how rarely we are indulged with the blossom. If a good parallel may be drawn from this reflection to human life, let us add another: a turnip is sweet to the taste, but gives a rancid and unpleasant flavour to every animal that feeds upon it. A life of peace and pleasure would probably have as bad an effect upon the mind

mind of man. And now I think you will run to Mrs. Desmoulines, or any other Mistress, as a refuge from your *true* Mistress's pedantry. Does that word remind me of Lord \* \* \* ? I hope not: he has seen much, read much, and travelled much; he talks a great deal, and from a very fashionably furnished mind.—When we saw him last, he bid me ask you whether there are three volumes, or only two, of Parker's History, or Parker's Memoirs, or some such thing. It was in Latin, and very fine Latin too he said. I knew not from beginning to end what he meant; and my ignorance reminded me of the maid servant Mr. Pepys tells of, who let her master know one morning that a gentleman had called when he was out the evening before, and begged he would lend him *three oxen and a hog'shead*. You won't understand me, child, added he, but your master will; it was *Theocritus and Horace's* works that were wanted; and I am much in the girl's case, for I comprehend not a syllable of \* \* \* 's request—and perhaps have transmitted it as wildly.

We have seen nothing but Mrs. \* \* \* \* here. She says all \* \* \* \* 's faults should be charged upon his mother, but then she is nobody's mother herself. How dreadful, instead of delightful, would it be, to contemplate one's house full of children, if all the future errors of each were to go to the mother's account! Yet would not my lot be heavy even *then*, for better babies breathe not—could I *but* keep them! than mine. Queeney shall send you a *proof-sheet* of her excellence to-morrow:

Poor S——y B——w is dying, they tell me; you liked her vastly that summer we were so much together with her at this place;—how happy Mr. Beauclerc is got better!—he is a prodigious favourite I know; but when you were sorry

for poor old Dr. F—zp——k it was mere virtue, as I think I never saw a stronger antipathy. Shall we write an epitaph upon him, and say, *he sat well at a table?*——for that was the highest praise we could ever get you to allow him, even with Murphy's help. Saint Pavin's inscription would not be amiss for Fitzpatrick; and there is a stroke in their lives too not very dissimilar.

Fitzpatrick's dead—wert thou his friend?  
 With tears lament thy lot:  
 Did fortune no such favour lend?  
 Lament that thou wert not.

*Sous ce tombeau gît Saint Pavin,  
 Donne des larmes à sa fin;  
 Tu fus de ses amis peut-être?  
 Pleure ton sort, pleure le sien;  
 Tu n'en fus pas? pleure le tien,  
 Passant, d'avoir manqué d'en être.*

I cannot guess how long we are to stay here; Mr. Thrale does not tell me, and I am, as you say, no good *winder*. Cardinal Alberoni was said to be so ingenious, that no concealed intentions of another could escape him; but Jean Rouffet, who writes his life, describes him as a rattling man too, that talked at all rates. Flashy, light, and loud conversation is often a cloke for cunning, I believe; as showy life, and gay outside spreads now and then a thin covering over avarice or poverty. The companion who rattles resembles a juggler, who, while your attention is fixed upon his talk, changes your gold into counters. This, however, I have no higher authority for, than Alberoni's character—Richardson's way of winding was more cold and sly.

I have

I have picked up some agreeable young folks, just come from school somewhere on the continent, who are going to London for the first time——with clear complexions, and hearts apparently as clear. We were saying how soon they would be altered. A capital city will, by even a short residence in it, change the whole mass. How florid, bright, and transparent is the arterial blood, before it has passed through the heart——metropolis of our human frame——for example; and how muddy, gross and heavy in comparison is that which we draw from the veins in its return. But I must say no more—you would rather be sick in London, I remember, then well in the country.

When are we likely to meet?——If the Doctor's waterfall roars happily, I think there is little chance, for a month, of your quitting Ashbourne, except to show its environs to Mr. Boswell. Derbyshire is a glorious county, and affords much matter for speculation; besides that, he will write down all you say, and all he says to you about every thing. Luckily for us his adorers, our dear Dr. Johnson wants very little *winding*; we may all know your opinions by asking them the straightest way; and mines are always best in a mountain where adits can most commodiously be made for bringing out the ore, you know.

Farewel, dear Sir, and love my husband, and like my letters; and pray be jealous of the S——'s and C——'s, they are so very likely to supply your loss to.

Your most faithful humble servant,

H. L. THRALE.

P. S. I

P. S. I am afraid you will be shocked at this story of Foote; and what will Mr. Murphy say? —I think he will feel very sorry. You must go to work hard about the Lives, and not let your fancy dwell upon it. These are just the things which business prevents from impressing one; it has no power at all, though so gravely recommended, over serious grief or real loss.

~~~~~

L E T T E R / CLXXXII.

To MRS. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Lichfield, October 3, 1777.

THIS is the last time that I shall write, in this excursion, from this place. To-morrow I shall be, I hope at Birmingham; from which place I shall do my best to find the nearest way home. I come home, I think, worse than I went; and do not like the state of my health. But, *vive bodie*, make the most of life. I hope to get better, and —sweep the cobwebs. But I have sad nights. Mrs. Aston has sent me to Mr. Green to be cured.

Did you see Foote at Brightelmstone? —Did you think he would so soon be gone? —Life, says Falstaff is a shuttle. He was a fine fellow in his way; and the world is really impoverished by his sinking glories. Murphy ought to write his life, at least to give the world a Footeana. Now, will any of his contemporaries bewail him? Will Genius change *his sex* to weep? I would really have his life written with diligence.

It

It will be proper for me to work pretty diligently now for some time. I hope to get through, though so many weeks have passed, Little lives and little criticisms may serve.

Having been in the country so long, with very little to detain me, I am rather glad to look homewards.

I am, &c.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



L E T T E R S

TO AND FROM THE LATE

Samuel Johnson, LL.D.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED

S O M E P O E M S,

NEVER BEFORE PRINTED.

PUBLISHED

FROM THE ORIGINAL MSS. IN HER POSSESSION,

By HESTER LYNCH PIOZZI.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

D U B L I N:

Printed for Messrs. G. BURNET, R. MONCRIEFFE,
L. WHITE, P. BYRNE, P. WOGAN, W. PORTER,
H. COLBERT, J. MOORE, and J. JONES.

M.DCC LXXXVIII.



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L E T T E R S

TO AND FROM

Samuel Johnson, LL.D.

L E T T E R CLXXXIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Athbourne, October 6, 1777.

YOU are glad that I am absent; and I am glad that you are sick. When you went away, what did you do with your aunt? I am glad she liked my Sufy; I was always a Sufy, when nobody else was a Sufy. How have you managed at your new place? Could you all get lodgings in one house, and meat at one table? Let me hear the whole series of misery; for, as Dr. Young says, *I love barrow*.

2 LETTERS TO AND FROM

Methinks you are now a great way off; and if I come, I have a great way to come to you; and then the sea is so cold, and the rooms are so dull; yet I do love to hear the sea roar and my mistress talk—For when she talks, ye gods! how she will talk. I wish I were with you, but we are now near half the length of England asunder. It is frightful to think how much time must pass between writing this letter and receiving an answer, if any answer were necessary.

Taylor is now going to have a ram; and then, after Aries and Taurus, we shall have Gemini. His oats are now in the wet; here is a deal of rain. Mr. Langdon bought, at Nottingham fair, fifteen tun of cheese; which, at an ounce a-piece, will suffice after dinner for four hundred and eighty thousand men. This is all the news that the place affords. I purpose soon to be at Lichfield, but know not just when, having been defeated of my first design. When I come to town, I am to be very busy about my Lives. Could not you do some of them for me?

I am glad Master unspelled you, and run you all on rocks, and drove you about, and made you stir. Never be cross about it. Quiet and calmness you have enough of—a little hurry stirs life—and,

Brushing over, adds motion to the pool.

DRYDEN.

Now *pool* brings my master's excavations into my head. I wonder how I shall like them; I should like not to see them, till we all see them together. He will have no waterfall to roar like the Doctor's. I sat by it yesterday, and read Erasmus's *Militis Christiani Enchiridion*. Have you got that book?

Make

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 3

Make my compliments to dear Queeney. I suppose she will dance at the Rooms; and your heart will go one knows not how.

I am, dearest, and dearest Lady,

Your most humble servant,

SAM. JOHNSON.



LETTER CLXXXIV.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

October 10, 1777.

AND so, supposing that I might come to town and neglect to give you notice, or thinking some other strange thought, but certainly thinking wrong, you fall to writing about me to Tom Davies, as if he could tell you any thing that I would not have you know. As soon as I came hither, I let you know of my arrival; and the consequence is, that I am summoned to Brighthelmstone through storms, and cold, and dirt, and all the hardships of wintry journies. You know my natural dread of all those evils; yet to shew my master an example of compliance, and to let you know how much I long to see you, and to boast how little I give way to disease, my purpose is to be with you on Friday.

B 2

I am

4 L E T T E R S T O A N D F R O M

I am sorry for poor Nezzzy, and hope she will in time be better; I hope the same for myself. The rejuvenescency of Mr. Scrase gives us both reason to hope, and therefore both of us rejoice in his recovery. I wish him well besides, as a friend to my master.

I am just come home from not seeing my Lord Mayor's shew, but I might have seen at least part of it. But I saw Miss Wesley and her brothers; she sends her compliments. Mrs. Williams is come home, I think a very little better.

Every body was an enemy to that wig.—We will burn it, and get drunk; for what is joy without drink? Wagers are laid in the city about our success, which is yet, as the French call it, problematical. Well, but seriously I think I shall be glad to see you in your own hair; but do not take too much time in combing, and twisting, and papering, and unpapering, and curling, and frizzing, and powdering, and getting out the powder, with all the operations required in the cultivation of a head of hair; yet let it be combed at least once in three months, on the quarter-day—I could wish it might be combed once at least in six weeks; if I were to indulge my wishes, but what are wishes without hopes, I should fancy the operation performed—one knows not when one has enough—perhaps every morning.

I am, dearest Lady,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 5

L E T T E R CLXXXV.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

October 13, 1777.

YET I do love to hear from you. Such pretty kind letters as you send. But it gives me great delight to find that my master misses me. I begin to wish myself with you more than I should do, if I were wanted less. It is a good thing to stay away till one's company is desired, but not so good to stay after it is desired.

You know I have some work to do. I did not set to it very soon; and if I should go up to London with nothing done, what would be said, but that I was——who can tell what? I therefore stay till I can bring up something to stop their mouths, and then——

Though I am still at Ashbourne, I receive your dear letters that come to Lichfield, and you continue that direction, for I think to get thither as soon as I can.

One of the does died yesterday, and I am afraid her fawn will be starved; I wish Miss Thrale had it to nurse; but the doctor is now all for cattle, and minds very little either does or hens.

How did you and your aunt part? Did you turn her out of doors to begin your journey? or did she leave you by her usual shortness of visits? I love to know how you go on.

I cannot but think on your kindness and my master's. Life has, upon the whole, fallen short, very short, of my early expectation; but the acquisition

6 LETTERS TO AND FROM

quisition of such a friendship, at an age when new friendships are seldom acquired, is something better than the general course of things gives man a right to expect. I think on it with great delight, I am not very apt to be delighted.

I am, &c.



LETTER CLXXXVI.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAREST LADY. Ashbourne, Oct. 16, 1777.

I AM just going out, and can write but little. How you should be long without a letter I know not, for I seldom miss a post. I purpose now to come to London as soon as I can, for I have a deal to look after, but hope I shall get through the whole business,

I wish you had told me your adventure, or told me nothing. Be civil to Lord * * * *, he seems to be a good kind of man. Miss may change her mind; and will change it, when she finds herself get more credit by dancing than by whist; and though she should continue to like, as she likes now, the harm is none.

Do not yet begin, dear Madam, to think about *the last*. You may well dance these dozen years, if you keep your looks as you have kept them; and I am glad that Hetty has no design to dance you down.

The

The poor P——. I am sorry for the girl; she seems to be doomed, before her time, to weakness and solicitude. What is that Bedrider the supervisor? He will be up again. But life seems to be closing upon them.

I hope you still continue to be sick, and my dear master to be well.

I am no sender of compliments, but take them once for all, and deliver them to be kept as rarities by Miss Owen, Mrs. Nesbit, Miss Hetty, and Dr. Burney.

Still direct to Lichfield, for thither I am hastening; and from Lichfield to London, and from London I hope to Brighthelmstone, and from Brighthelmstone, *qua terra patet*.

I am, dearest of all dear Ladies,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CLXXXVII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Lichfield, October 22, 1777.

I AM come, at last, to Lichfield, and am really glad that I am got away from a place where there was indeed no evil, but very little good. You may, I believe, write once to Lichfield after you receive this, but after that it will be best to direct to London.

Your

8 LETTERS TO AND FROM

Your threat is, I suppose, well by this time. Poor Mrs. * * * * it is impossible to think on without great compassion.—Against a blow so sudden, and so unexpected, I wonder that she supports herself. The consolations of * * * * * girls must indeed be painful. She had intended to enjoy the triumph of her daughter's superiority. They were prepared to win them both ill, and their wishes are gratified. There is in this event a kind of system of calamity, or conflagration of the soul. Every avenue of pain is invaded at once.—Pride is mortified, tenderness is wounded, hope is disappointed, —Whither will the poor Lady run from herself?

My visit to Stowhill has been paid. I have seen there a collection of misery. Mrs. Aston paralytick, Mrs. Walmley lame, Mrs. Hervey blind, and I think another lady deaf. Even such is life.

I hope dear Mrs. Aston is a little better; it is however very little. She was, I believe, glad to see me; and to have any body glad to see me is a great pleasure.

I will tell, while I think on it, that I really saw with my own eyes Mr. Chaplin of Lincolnshire's letter for Taylor's cow, accompanied with a draught on Hoare for one hundred and twenty-six pounds to pay for her. Frank says, the young bull is not quite so big as the old one; Taylor, I think, says he is bigger.

I have seen but one new place this journey, and that is Leek in the Morlands.—An old church, but a poor town.

The days grow short, and we have frosts; but I am in all weathers, Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER

Dr. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

LETTER CLXXXVIII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM.

Lichfield, October 25, 1777.

CHOLMONDELY's story shocks me, if it be true, which I can hardly think, for I am utterly unconscious of it; I am very sorry, and very much ashamed.

I am here for about a week longer, and then I purpose to hasten to London. How long do you stay at Brighthelmstone? Now the company is gone, why should you be the lag? The season of brewing will soon be here, if it is not already come. We have here cold weather, and loud winds.

Miss Porter is better than is usual, and Mrs. Aston is, I hope, not worse, but she is very bad; and being, I fancy, about sixty-eight, is it likely that she will ever be better?

It is really now a long time that we have been writing and writing, and yet how small a part of our minds have we written? We shall meet, I hope, soon, and talk it out.

You are not yet sixty-eight, but it will come, and perhaps you may then sometimes remember me.

In the mean time, do not think to be young beyond the time; do not play Agnes; and do not grow old before your time, nor suffer yourself to be too soon driven from the stage. You can yet give pleasure by your appearance; show yourself therefore, and be pleased by pleasing. It is not now too soon to be wise; nor is it yet too late to be gay.

Streatham

10 LETTERS TO AND FROM

Streatham is now, I suppose, the eighth wonder of the world: I long to see it, but do not intend to go till, as I once said before, my master, and you, and I, and nobody else shall be with us—perambulate it together.

Cicely, I warrant you, will do well enough. I am glad you are so sick, and nobody to pity. Now for another pretty little girl.—But we know not what is best.

I am, dearest Lady,

Your, &c.

P. S. Pay my respects to Miss Owen.



L E T T E R CLXXXIX.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Lichfield, October 27, 1777.

YOU talk of writing and writing, as if you had all the writing to yourself. If our correspondence were printed, I am sure posterity, for posterity is always the author's favourite, would say that I am a good writer too.—*Anch'io sono pittore.* To sit down so often with nothing to say; to say something so often, almost without consciousness of saying, and without any remembrance of having said, is a power of which I will not violate my modesty by boasting, but I do not believe that every body has it.

Some,

Some, when they write to their friends, are all affection; some are wise and sententious; some strain their powers for efforts of gaiety; some write news, and some write secrets; but to make a letter without affection, without wisdom, without gaiety, without news, and without a secret, is, doubtless, the great epistolick art.

In a man's letters, you know, Madam, his soul lies naked, his letters are only the mirrour of his breast; whatever passes within him is shown undisguised in its natural process; nothing is inverted, nothing distorted; you see systems in their elements; you discover actions in their motives.

Of this great truth, sounded by the knowing to the ignorant, and so echoed by the ignorant to the knowing, what evidence have you now before you. Is not my soul laid open in these veracious pages? Do not you see me reduced to my first principles? This is the pleasure of corresponding with a friend, where doubt and distrust have no place, and every thing is said as it is thought. The original idea is laid down in its simple purity, and all the supervenient conceptions are spread over it *stratum super stratum*, as they happen to be formed. These are the letters by which souls are united, and by which minds naturally in unison move each other as they are moved themselves. I know, dearest Lady, that in the perusal of this, such is the consanguinity of our intellects, you will be touched as I am touched. I have indeed concealed nothing from you, nor do I expect ever to repent of having thus opened my heart.

I am, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R C X C .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

DEAR MADAM

Lichfield, October 29, 1777.

THOUGH after my last letter I might justly claim an interval of rest, yet I write again to tell you, that for this turn you will hear but once more from Lichfield. This day is Wednesday, on Saturday I shall write again, and on Monday I shall set out to seek adventures; for you know,

None but the brave deserve the fair.

On Monday we hope to see Birmingham, the seat of the mechanick arts; and know not whether our next stage will be Oxford, the mansion of the liberal arts; or London, the residence of all the arts together. The chymists call the world *Academia Paracelsi*; my ambition is to be his fellow-student—to see the works of nature, and hear the lectures of truth. To London therefore—London may perhaps fill me; and I hope to fill my part of London.

In the mean time, let me continue to keep the part which I have had so long in your kindness, and my master's; for if that should grow less, I know not where to find that which may supply the diminution. But I hope what I have been so happy as to gain I shall have the happiness of keeping.

I always omitted to tell you that Lucy's maid took the worm-powder with strict regularity, but with no great effect. Lucy has had several letters from you, but cannot prevail on herself to write; but she is very grateful.

Mrs.

Mrs. Walmsley has been at Stowhill, and has invited me, when I come to Bath, to be at her house. Poor Mrs. Aston either mends not at all, or not perceptibly; but she does not seem to grow worse.

I suppose * * * * * is by this time recovered, and perhaps grown wiser, than to shake his constitution so violently a second time.

Poor Mrs. * * * * !- One cannot think on her but with great compassion. But it is impossible for her husband's daughters not to triumph; and the husband will feel, as Rochefoucault says, *something that does not displease him*. You and I, who are neutral, whom her happiness could not have depressed, may be honestly sorry.

I am, dear Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CXCI.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM.

April 30, 1778.

SINCE I was fetched away from Streatham, the journal stands thus:

Saturday.—Sir J. R.

Sunday.—Mr. Hooke.

Monday.—Lord Lucan.

Tuesday.—Gen. Paoli.

Wednesday.

14 LETTERS TO AND FROM

Wednesday.—Mr. Ramsay.

Thursday.—Old Bailey.

Friday.—Club.

Saturday.—Sir J. R.

Sunday.—Lady Lucan.

Monday.—Pray let it be Streatham, and very early ; do now let it be very early. For I may be carried away—just like Ganymede of Troy.

I hope my master grows well, and my mistress continues bad. I am afraid the ladies will be gone, and I shall say,

She's gone, and never knew how much I lov'd her.

Do now let me know whether you will send for me—early—on Monday. But take some care, or your letter will not come till Tuesday.

I am, dearest Lady,

Your, &c.



LETTER CXCII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST MADAM,

October 15, 1778.

YOU that are among all the wits, delighting and delighted, have little need of entertainment from me, whom you left at home unregarded and unpitied, to shift in a world to which you have made

made me so much a stranger; yet I know you will pretend to be angry if I do not write a letter, which, when you know the hand, you will perhaps lay aside to be read when you are dressing to-morrow; and which, when you have read it, if that time ever comes, you will throw away into the drawer and say—stuff!

As to Dr. Collier's epitaph, Nollkens has had it so long, that I have forgotten how long. You never had it. So you may set the S———s at defiance.

There is a print of Mrs. Montague, and I shall think myself very ill rewarded for my love and admiration if she does not give me one; she will give it nobody in whom it will excite more respectful sentiments. But I never could get any thing from her but by pushing a face; and so, if you please, you may tell her.

I hope you let Miss S——— know how safe you keep her book. It was too fine for a scholar's talons. I hope she gets books that she may handle with more freedom, and understand with less difficulty. Do not let her forget me.

When I called the other day at Burney's, I found only the young ones at home; at last came the Doctor and Madam, from a dinner in the country, to tell how they had been robbed as they returned. The Doctor saved his purse, but gave them three guineas and some silver, of which they returned him three-and-sixpence, unasked, to pay the turnpike.

I have sat twice to Sir Joshua, and he seems to like his own performance. He has projected another, in which I am to be busy; but we can think on it at leisure.

Mrs. Williams is come home better, and the habitation is all concord and harmony; only Mr. Levet harbours discontent.

With

With Dr. Lawrence's consent, I have, for the two last nights, taken musk; the first night was a worse night than common, the second a better but not so much better as that I dare ascribe any virtue to the medicine. I took a scruple each time.

Now Miss has seen the camp, I think she should write me some account of it. A camp, however familiarly we may speak of it, is one of the great scenes of human life. War and peace divide the business of the world. Camps are the habitations of those who conquer kingdoms, or defend them.

But what are wits, and pictures, and camps, and physick? There is still a nearer concern to most of us.—Is my master come to himself? Does he talk, and walk, and look about him, as if there were yet something in the world for which it is worth while to live? Or does he yet sit and say nothing? He was mending before he went, and surely he has not relapsed. To grieve for evils is often wrong; but it is much more wrong to grieve without them. All sorrow that lasts longer than its cause is morbid, and should be shaken off as an attack of melancholy, as the forerunner of a greater evil than poverty or pain.

I never said with Dr. Dodd that *I love to prattle upon paper*, but I have prattled now till the paper will not hold much more than my good wishes, which I sincerely send you.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R

L E T T E R E X C I I I .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

DEAREST LADY, London, October 24, 1778.

I HAVE written Miss such a long letter, that I cannot tell how soon I shall be weary of writing another, having made no new discoveries since my last, either in art or nature, which may not be kept till we see each other; and sure that time is not far off. The Duchess is a good Duchess for courting you while she stays, and for not staying to court you, till my courtship loses all its value. You are there as I would have you, except your humours. When my master grows well, must you take your turn to be melancholy? You appear to me to be now floating on the spring-tide of prosperity; on a tide not governed by the moon, but as the moon governs your heads; on a tide therefore which is never likely to ebb but by your own faults. I think it very probably in your power to lay up eight thousand pounds a-year for every year to come, increasing all the time, what needs not be encreased, the splendour of all external appearance. And surely such a state is not to be put into yearly hazard for the pleasure of *keeping the house full*, or the ambition of *outbrewing Whitbread*. Stop now and you are safe—stop a few years, and you may go safely on hereafter, if to go on shall seem worth the while.

I am sorry for Mrs. * * * *; we never could make any thing of the lawyer, when we had him among us. * * * * has got some vanity in her head.

head. Vanity always oversets a lady's judgment. I have not told, unless it be Williams, and I do not know that I have told her. If Streatfield has a little kindness for me, I am glad. I call now and then on the Burney's, where you are at the top of mortality.—When will you come home?

Two days ago Dr. Lawrence ordered a new medicine, which I think to try to-night, but my hopes are not high. I mean to try however, and not languish without resistance.

Young Desmoulines is taken in *an under-something* of Drury-lane; he knows not, I believe, his own denomination.

My two clerical friends, Darby and Worthington, have both died this month. I have known Worthington long, and to die is dreadful. I believe he was a very good man.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R C X C I V .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

DEAR MADAM,

October 31, 1778.

YOUR letter seemed very long a-coming, and was very welcome at last; do not be so long again.

Long

Long live Sir John Shelly, that lures my master to hunt. I hope he will soon shake off the black dog, and come home as light as a feather. And long live Mrs. G——, that downs my mistress. I hope she will come home as flexible as a rush. I see my wish is rather ambiguous, it is to my mistress that I wish flexibility. As to the imitation imputed to Mrs. G——, if she makes any thing like a copy, her powers of imitation are very great; for I do not remember that she ever saw me but once. If she copies me she will lose more credit by want of judgment than she will gain by quickness of apprehension.

Of Mrs. B—— I have no remembrance; perhaps her voice is low.

Miss * * * * is just gone from me. I told her how you took to them all; but told her likewise how you took to Miss * * * *. All poisons have their antidotes.

Sir Joshua has finished my picture, and it seems to please every body, but I shall wait to see how it pleases you.

Of your conditions of happiness, do not set your heart upon any but what Providence puts in your own power. Your debts you may pay—much you may lay up. The rest you can only pray for. Of your daughters, three are out of the danger of children's distempers, the other two have hardly yet tried whether they can live or no. You ought not yet to count them among your settled possessions.

Is it true that Mrs. D—— is *enceinte*? It will give her great influence.

To-day Mrs. Williams and Mrs. Desmoulines had a scold, and Williams was going away, but I bid her *not turn tail*, and she came back, and rather got the upper hand.

I wish you would come back again to us all ;
you will find nobody among your fine ladies that
will love you as you are loved by,

Dearest Lady,

Your, &c.



L E T T E R C X C V .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

DEAR MADAM,

Nov. 9. 1778.

THE Lord Mayor has had a dismal day.—
Will not this weather drive you home? Perhaps
you know not any body that will be glad to see
you. I hope our well will yield water again, and
something fuller you will find the pond; but then
all the trees are naked, and the ground damp—
but the year must go round.

While you are away I take great delight in your
letters, only when you talk so much of obligations
to me, you should consider how much you put
me in the condition of *honest Joseph*.

Young Desmoulines thinks he has got something,
he knows not what, at Drury-lane; his mother
talks little of it.—Sure it is not a *hum*? Mr.
Levet, who thinks his ancient rights invaded,
stands at bay, *fierce as ten furies*. Mrs. Williams
growls and scolds, but Poll does not much flinch.
Every body is in want. I shall be glad to see
Streatham

Streatham again, but I can find no reason for going to Brighthelmstone, but that of seeing my master and you three days sooner.

I am, &c.



LETTER CXCV.

Mrs. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

Brighthelmstone, Nov. 11, 1778.

YOU are very kind, dear Sir, in wishing us at home, and we are very much obliged to you for all your good wishes, and all your good help towards our happiness; notwithstanding the worthy parallel you draw between yourself and *honest Joseph*. That letter in *Clarissa* was always a favourite of mine—'tis nature, 'tis truth, and what I delight in still more, 'tis general nature, not particular manners, that Richardson represents:—Honest Joseph, and Pamela's old father and mother, are translatable, not like Fielding's fat landladies, who all speak the Wiltshire dialect—*arrow* man, or *arrow* woman, instead of *e'er a man* and *e'er a woman*. Such minute attentions to things scarce worth attending to, are at best, excellencies of a meaner kind, and most worthy the partiality of him who collects Dutch paintings in preference to the Italian school. But I dare not add another word on this subject, though you are a Richardsonian yourself.

With

With regard to coming home, *en la que toca al rebusinar*, as Sancho says : I have leave to be explicit. Burney shall bring you on the 26th ; so now we may talk about Richardson and Fielding if we will, or of any thing else *but* coming home ; for did not wise Ulysses go to sleep as soon as he was within sight of his own country, which he had hunted no less than ten long years ? And does not the Irishman, when at half the earth's diameter from his mistress, cry out, *Ah ! my dear Sheelah O'Shalah, were I once within forty miles of those pretty eyes, I would never desire to be nearer them in all my life ?* So why should not I, after fretting to come home ever since we came hither, though I never said so—why should not I, now the day is fixed—forget and think no more on't ? That, says Mr. Johnson, is a bad place of which the best good thing is bad weather—yet that is true of Brighthelmstone this Autumn ; and last week we had some storms that were very sublime. To see the ship how she fought, as the Clown says, and the sea how he flap-dragoned it, was a fine sight to us safely posted observers—*Suave mari magno*, &c.—And what are Mrs. Williams and Mrs. Desmoulins compared to the winds and the waves ? There are horn lanterns (you remember) and paper lanterns, but what are they when opposed to the sun and moon ? Winter is coming on apace, that's certain ; and it will be three months at least that we shall live without the sight of either leaf or blossom ; we will try good fires and good humour, and make ourselves all the amends we can. *I have lost more than Spring and Summer—I have lost what made my happiness in all seasons of the year ; but the black dog shall not make prey of both my master and myself.—Much is gone—*

What

What then remains, but well what's left to use?
And keep good humour still, whate'er we lose.

The speech in this place is, how we escape the melancholy months that shew a decaying year, because there are no leaves to fall forsooth.—But don't you know April from November without trees? Methinks, wanting woods to tell the seasons, is as bad as wanting a weathercock to know which way the wind blows. Here is Mr. * * *, however who talks all about taste, and classics, and country customs, and rural sports, with rapture, which he perhaps fancies unaffected—was riding by our chaise on the Downs yesterday, and said, because the sun shone, that one could not perceive it was Autumn, for, says he, there is not one tree in sight to shew us the fall of the leaf; and hark! how that bird sings, continued he, just like the first week in May. No, no, replied I, that's nothing but a poor robin-redbreast, whose chill wintry note tells the season too plainly, without assistance from the vegetable kingdom. Why, you amaze me, quoth our friend, I had no notion of *that*. Yet Mrs. * * * * says, this man is a natural converser, and Mrs. * * * * is an honourable lady.

My master is a good man, and a generous, he has made me some valuable presents here; and he swims now, and forgets the black dog.

Mr. Murphy is a man whose esteem every one must be proud of; I wrote to him about Evelina two days ago.

Mr. Scrase is the comfort of our lives here. Driven from business by ill health, he concentrates his powers now to serve private friends. For true vigour of mind, for invariable attachment to those he has long loved, for penetration to find the right way, and spirit to pursue it, I have seen
none

none exceed him. How much more valuable is such a character than that of a polite scholar, your belles lettres man, who would never have known that bees made honey, had not Virgil written his *Georgicks*?

Your visiting ticket has been left very completely in Wales. Was it the fashion to leave cards in Prior's time? I thought not—Yet he seems to allude to the custom, when he says, People

Should in life's visit leave their name;
And in the writing take great care
That all was full, and round, and fair.

The Welch, I once told you, would never be ungrateful—*a-propos*, I am not myself half grateful enough to Mr. Fitzmaurice, for his unsought and undeserved civilities towards me, concerning my old house and pictures in Wales.—Though you despise them, you do not, I am sure, despise me for desiring that he should be pleased. So now *do pray* help to discharge some of my debts of politeness, and write him a pretty letter on his son's birth—and get it finished, signed, sealed, and delivered at farthest—before the boy *comes of age*, if you can.

My friend * * * * is dying, sure enough; but dear Mrs. * * * * need be in no concern for *his* future state, on the same score she trembled for her husband's: do you remember how prettily she congratulated me that my mother would go to heaven, while poor —, says she, God knows, what will become of *him!* *for if it were not for the Mayoril* he would never have known Christmas from Whitsuntide. Ah! dear Sir, and don't you think I prize you more, now I have lost my last surviving parent?—Such a parent!—Yes, yes—*one* may have twenty children, but *amor descendit*,
it

it is by one's father and mother alone that one is loved. I, poor solitary wretch! have no regard now from any one, except what I can purchase by good behaviour, or flattery, or incessant fatigue of attention, and be worked at besides, sick or well, with intolerable diligence, or else I lose even you, whom I daily esteem more, as I see the virtue of some so diluted by folly, and the understanding of others so tainted by vice. I am now far from happy, yet I dress, and dance, and do my best to shew others how merry I am.—It is the Winter robin that twitters though, not the Summer throftle that sings.

I long to come home, but wherever I am depend on my being ever,

DEAR SIR,

Your most obedient servant,

H. L. THRALE.

Mr. Scrase gives us fine fruit; I wished you my pear yesterday, but then what would *one pear* have done for you?

LETTER

LETTER CXCVII.

To Mrs. THRALE,

DEAREST MADAM,

Nov. 14, 1778.

THEN I really think I shall be very glad to see you all safe at home. I shall easily forgive my master his long stay, if he leaves the dog behind him. We will watch, as well as we can, that the dog shall never be let in again, for when he comes the first thing he does is to worry my master. This time he gnawed him to the bone. Content, said Rider's almanack, makes a man richer than the Indies. But surely he that has the Indies in his possession, may without very much philosophy make himself content. So much for my master and his dog, a vile one it is, but I hope if he is not hanged he is drowned; with another lusty shake he will pick my master's heart out.

I have begun to take valerian; the two last nights I took an ounce each night—a very loathsome quantity. Dr Lawrence talked of a decoction, but I say, all or nothing. The first night I thought myself better, but the next it did me no good.

Young Desmoulines says, he is settled at a weekly pay of twenty-five shillings, about forty pounds a-year. Mr. Macbean has no business. We have tolerable concord at home, but no love. Williams hates every body. Levet hates Desmoulines, and does not love Williams. Desmoulines hates them both. Poll loves none of them.

Dr. Burney had the luck to go to Oxford the only week in the year when the library is shut up.
He

He was however very kindly treated; as one man is translating Arabick, and another Welsh, for his service. Murphy told me that you wrote to him about Evelina. *Francis* wants to read it.

And on the 26th Burney is to bring me. Pray why so? Is it not as fit that I should bring Burney? My master is in his old lunes, and so am I. Well, I do not much care how it is, and yet—
at it again.

Pray make my compliments to Mr. Scrase. He has many things which I wish to have, his knowledge of business and of the law. He has likewise a great chair. Such an one my Master talked of getting; but that vile black dog—

Mrs. Queeney might write to me, and do herself no harm; she will neglect me till I shall take to Susy, and then Queeney may break her heart, and who can be blamed? I am sure I stuck to Queeney as long as I could.

Does not Master talk how full his canal will be when he comes home? Now or never. I know not how the soil was laid; if it slopes towards the canal, it may pour in a great deal of water, but I suspect it slopes the wrong way.

This is but the fourteenth day; there are twelve more to the twenty-sixth. Did you ever hear of notching a stick? however we have it in Horace—*trahitur dies die*; as twelve days have gone, twelve days will come.

Hector of Birmingham just looked in at me. He is come to his only niece, who is ill of a cancer; I believe with very little hope, for it is knotted in two places.

I think at least I grow no worse; perhaps valerian may make me better. Let me have your prayers.

I am, dearest Lady,
Your, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R C X C V I I I .

T o M r s . T H R A L E .

D E A R M A D A M ,

N o v . 2 1 , 1 7 7 8 .

I WILL write to you once more before you come away ; but—*nil mihi rescribas*—I hope soon to see you, Burney and I have settled it ; and I will not take a post-chaise, merely to shew my independence,

Now the dog is drowned, I shall see both you and my master just as you used to be, and with your being as you have been, your friends may very reasonably be satisfied,—Only, be better if you can.

Return my thanks, if you please, to Queeney for her letter. I do not yet design to leave her for Susy ; but how near is the time when she will leave me, and leave me to Susy, or any body else that will pick me up.

————— *Currit enim ferox*
Ætas, et illi, quos tibi demserit,
Apponet annos.—————

Queeney, whom you watched while I held her, will soon think our care of her very superfluous.

Miss Biron, and, I suppose, Mrs. Biron, is gone. You are by this time left alone to wander over the Steine, and listen to the waves.—This is but a dull life. Come away and be busy, and count your poultry, and look into your dairy, and at leisure hours learn what revolutions have happened at Streatham.

I believe

I believe I told you that Jack Desmoulines is rated upon the book at Drury-lane five-and-twenty shillings a-week.

Baretti has told his musical scheme to B——, and B——*will neither grant the question nor deny.* He is of opinion, that if it does not fail it will succeed, but if it does not succeed he conceives it must fail.

It is good to speak dubiously about futurity. It is likewise not amiss to hope.

Did I ever tell you that * * * * * was married? It so fell out, that * * * * * fell in love with a girl whose fortune was so small that he perhaps could not mention it to his father; but it happened likewise, by the lottery of love, that the father liked her so well, as himself to recommend her to * * * *. Such coincidence is rare.

Come now, do come home as fast as you can:

Come with a whoop, come with a call,
Come with a good will, or come not at all.

I am, &c.

LETTER CXCIX.

To Mrs. THRALE.

March 10, 1779.

AND so, dear Madam, it is a mumm to see who will speak first. I will come to see you on Saturday,

30 L E T T E R S T O A N D F R O M

Saturday, only let me know whether I must come to the Borough, or am to be taken up here.

Baretti's golden dream is now but silver. He is of my mind; he says. there is no money for diversions. But we make another onset on Friday, and this is to be the last time this season.

I got my Lives, not yet quite printed, put neatly together; and sent them to the King; what he says of them I know not. If the King is a Whig, he will not like them; but is any king a Whig?

So far had I gone, when in came Mr. Thrale, who will have the honour of bringing it.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R C C.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

March 18, 1779.

THERE is some comfort in writing, when such praise is to be had. Plato is a multitude.

On Monday I came late to Mrs. Vesey. Mrs. Montague was there; I called for the print, and got good words. The evening was not brilliant, but I had thanks for my company. The night was troublesome. On Tuesday I fasted, and went to the Doctor: he ordered bleeding. On Wednesday I had the teapot, fasted and was blooded. Wednesday night was better. To-day I have dined at Mr. Strahan's at Islington, with his new wife.

To-

To-night there will be opium. To-morrow the teapot. Then heigh for Saturday. I wish the Doctor would bleed me again. Yet every body that I meet says that I look better than when I was last met.

I am, dearest Lady,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCI.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

May 20, 1779.

THE vicissitudes of things, and the eddies of life, are now carrying you southward, and me northward. When shall we meet again?

I must beg of you to send Mr. Watson's papers to my house, directed for him, and sealed up. I know not whether he does not think himself in danger of piracy.

Take care that Susy sees all that Sophy has seen; that she may tell her travels, and give them a taste of the world. And take care, and write to me very often, till we meet again; and keep Master in good thoughts of me.——Vale.

LETTER CCII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

MADAM,

Litchfield, May 29, 1779.

I HAVE now been here a week, and will try to give you my journal, or such parts of it as are fit in my mind for communication.

On Friday.—We set out about twelve, and lay at Daventry.

On Saturday.—We dined with Mr. Rann at Coventry. He intercepted us at the town's end. I saw Tom Johnson, who had hardly life to know that I was with him. I hear he is since dead. In the evening I came to Lucy, and walked to Stowhill; Mrs. Aston was gone or going to bed; I did not see her.

Sunday.—After dinner I went to Stowhill, and was very kindly received. At night I saw my old friend Brodhurst—you know him—the play-fellow of my infancy, and gave him a guinea.

Monday.—Dr. Taylor came, and we went with Mrs. Cobb to Greenhill Bower. I had not seen it perhaps for fifty years. It is much degenerated. Every thing grows old. Taylor is to fetch me next Saturday.

Mrs. Green came to see us, and I ordered some physick.

Tuesday.—Physick, and a little company. I dined, I think, with Lucy both Monday and Tuesday.

Wednesday. } I had a few visits, from Peter
Thursday. } Garrick among the rest, and
dined at Stowhill. My breath very short.

Friday.

Friday.—I dined at Stowhill. I have taken physick four days together.

Saturday.—Mrs. Aston took me out in her chaise, and was very kind. I dined with Mrs. Cobb, and came to Lucy, with whom I found, as I had done the first day, Lady Smith and Miss Vyle.

This is the course of my life. You do not think it much makes me forget Streatham. However it is good to wander a little, lest one should dream that all the world was Streatham, of which one may venture to say, *none but itself can be its parallel.*

I am, &c.

L E T T E R CCIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Ashbourne, June 14, 1779.

YOUR account of Mr. Thrale's illness is very terrible; but when I remember that he seems to have it peculiar to his constitution, that whatever distemper he has, he always has his head affected, I am less frightened. The seizure was, I think, not apoplectical, but hysterical, and therefore not dangerous to life. I would have you however consult such physicians as you think you can best trust.

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D

Bromfield

Bromfield seems to have done well, and by his practice appears not to suspect an apoplexy. That is a solid and fundamental comfort. I remember Dr. Marfigli, an Italian physician, whose seizure was more violent than Mr. Thrall's, for he fell down helpless, but his case was not considered as of much danger, and he went safe home, and is now a professor at Padua. His fit was considered as only hysterical.

I hope Sir Philip, who franked your letter, comforts you as well as Mr. Seward. If I can comfort you, I will come to you, but I hope you are now no longer in want of any help to be happy.

I am, &c.

The Doctor sends his compliments; he is one of the people that are growing old.



LETTER CCIV.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

Ashbourne, June 14, 1779.

HOW near we all are to extreme danger. We are merry or sad, or busy or idle, and forget that death is hovering over us. You are a dear lady for writing again. The case, as you now describe it, is worse than I conceived it when I
read

read your first letter. It is still however not apoplectick, but seems to have something worse than hysterical, a tendency to a palsy, which I hope however is now over. I am glad that you have Heberden, and hope we are all safer. I am the more alarmed by this violent seizure, as I can impute it to no wrong practices, or intemperance of any kind, and therefore know not how any defence or preservative can be obtained. Mr. Thrall has certainly less exercise than when he followed the foxes, but he is very far from unwieldiness or inactivity, and further still from any vicious or dangerous excess. I fancy, however, he will do well to ride more.

Do, dear Madam, let me know every post how he goes on. Such sudden violence is very dreadful; we know not by what it is let loose upon us, nor by what its effects are limited.

If my coming can either assist or divert, or be useful to any purpose, let me but know. I will soon be with you.

Mrs. Kennedy, Queeney's Baucis, ended last week a long life of disease and poverty. She had been married about fifty years.

Dr. Taylor is not much amiss, but always complaining.

I am, &c.

P. S. Direct the next to Lichfield.

L E T T E R C C V .

To Mrs. T H A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Ashbourne, June 17, 1779.

IT is certain that your first letter did not alarm me in proportion to the danger, for indeed it did not describe the danger as it was. I am glad that you have Heberden; and hope his restoratives and his preservatives will both be effectual. In the preservatives dear Mr. Thrale must concur; yet what can he reform? or what can he add to his regularity and temperance? He can only sleep less. We will do, however, all we can. I go to Lichfield to-morrow, with intent to hasten to Streatham,

Both Mrs. Aston and Dr. Taylor have had strokes of the palsy. The Lady was sixty-eight, and at that age has gained ground upon it; the Doctor is, you know, not young, and he is quite well, only suspicious of every sensation in the pectant arm. I hope my dear master's case is yet slighter, and that as his age is less, his recovery will be more perfect. Let him keep his thoughts diverted, and his mind easy.

I am, dearest and dearest,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R

L E T T E R C C V I.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Lichfield, June 19, 1779.

WHETHER it was that your description of dear Mr. Thrale's disorder was indistinct, or that I am not ready at guessing calamity, I certainly did not know our danger—our danger, for sure I have a part in it, till that danger was abated.

I am glad that Dr. Heberden, and that you perceive so plainly his recovery. He certainly will not be without any warning that I can give him against pernicious practices. His proportion of sleep, if he slept in the night, was doubtless very uncommon; but I do not think that he slept himself into a palsy. But perhaps a lethargick is likewise a paralytical disposition. We will watch him as well as we can. I have known a man who had a stroke like this, die forty years afterward without another. I hope we have now nothing to fear, or no more than is unalterably involved in the life of man.

I begin now to let loose my mind after Queeney and Burney. I hope they are both well. It will not be long before I shall be among you; and it is a very great degree of pleasure to hope that I shall be welcome.

I am, dear Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R

L E T T E R CCVII.

To Mr. T H R A L E.

DEAR SIR,

Lichfield, June 23, 1779.

TO shew you how well I think of your health, I have sent you an hundred pounds to keep for me. It will come within one day of quarter day, and that day you must give me. I came by it in a very uncommon manner, and would not confound it with the rest.

My wicked mistress talks as if she thought it possible for me to be indifferent or negligent about your health or hers. If I could have done any good, I had not delayed an hour to come to you, and I will come very soon to try if my advice can be of any use, or my company of any entertainment.

What can be done you must do for yourself; do not let any uneasy thought settle in your mind. Cheerfulness and exercise are your great remedies. Nothing is for the present worth your anxiety. *Vivite lati* is one of the great rules of health. I believe it will be good to ride often, but never to weariness, for weariness is itself a temporary resolution of the nerves, and is therefore to be avoided. Labour is exercise continued to fatigue—exercise is labour used only while it produces pleasure.

Above all, keep your mind quiet, do not think with earnestness even of your health, but think on such things as may please without too much agitation; among which I hope is, dear Sir,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R

LETTER CCVIII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

June 24, 1779.

THOUGH I wrote yesterday to Mr. Thrale, I think I must write this day to you; and I hope this will be the last letter, for I am coming up as fast as I can; but to go down cost me seven guineas, and I am loth to come back at the same charge.

You really do not use me well in thinking that I am in less pain on this occasion than I ought to be. There is nobody left for me to care about but you and my master, and I have now for many years known the value of his friendship, and the importance of his life, too well not to have him very near my heart. I did not at first understand his danger, and when I knew it, I was told likewise that it was over—and over I hope it is for ever. I have known a man seized in the same manner, who, though very irregular and intemperate, was never seized again. Do what you can, however, to keep my master cheerful, and slightly busy, till his health is confirmed; and if we can be sure of that, let Mr. Perkins go to Ireland and come back as opportunity offers, or necessity requires, and keep yourself airy, and be a *funny little thing*.

I am, &c.

LETTER

LETTER CCIX.

To Mr. THRALE.

DEAR SIR,

July 15, 1779.

THOUGH I wrote yesterday to my mistress, I cannot forbear writing immediately to you, my sincere congratulation upon your recovery from so much disorder, and your escape from so much danger. I should have had a very heavy part in the misfortune of losing you, for it is not likely that I should ever find such another friend, and proportionate at least to my fear must be my pleasure.

As I know not that you brought this disease upon yourself by any irregularity, I have no advice to give you. I can only wish, and I wish it sincerely, that you may live long and happily, and long count among those that love you best, dear Sir,

Your, &c.

LETTER

LETTER CCX.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

Monday, Oct. 4, 1779.

I HAD intended to send you such a card as I have inclosed, when I was alarmed by hearing that my servant had told in the house, for servants never tell their masters, his opinion--that for the two last days Mr. Thrale was visibly worse. His eyes are keen, and his attention upon such occasions vigorous enough.

I therefore earnestly wish, that before you set out, even though you should lose a day, you would go together to Heberden, and see what advice he will give you. In this doubtful pendulous state of the distemper, advice may do much; and physicians, be their power less or more, are the only refuge that we have in sickness. I wish you would do yet more, and propose to Heberden a consultation with some other of the doctors; and if Lawrence is at present fit for business, I wish he might be called, but call somebody. As you make yourselves of more importance, you will be more considered. Do not go away with any reason to tax yourselves with negligence. You are in a state in which nothing that can be done ought to be omitted. We now do right or wrong for a great stake. You may send the children and nurses forward to-morrow, and go yourselves on Wednesday. Little things must not now be minded, and least of all must you mind a little money. What the world has is to be sold, and to be enjoyed by those that will pay its price. Do not
give

give Heberden a single guinea, and subscribe a hundred to keep out the French; we have an invasion more formidable, and an enemy less resistible by power, and less avoidable by flight. I have now done my duty.

I am, dearest Lady,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R C C X I .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

DEAR MADAM,

Oct. 5, 1779.

WHEN Mr. Boswell waited on Mr. Thrale in Southwark, I directed him to watch all appearances with close attention, and bring me his observations. At his return he told me, that without previous intelligence he should not have discovered that Mr. Thrale had been lately ill.

It appears to me that Mr. Thrale's disorder, whether grumous or serous, must be cured by bleeding; and I would not have him begin a course of exercise without considerable evacuation. To encrease the force of the blood, unless it be first diluted and attenuated, may be dangerous. But the case is too important for my theory.

The weakness in my ankles left them for a day, but has now turned to a pain in my toe, much
like

like that at Brightelmstone. It is not bad, nor much more than troublesome; I hope it will not be greater, nor last long.

You all go with the good wishes of, dear Madam,

... Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCXII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

London, Oct. 8, 1779.

I BEGIN to be frightened at your omission to write; do not torment me any longer, but let me know where you are, how you got thither, how you live there, and every thing else that one friend loves to know of another.

I will show you the way.

On Sunday the gout left my ankles, and I went very commodiously to church. On Monday night I felt my feet uneasy. On Tuesday I was quite lame. That night I took an opiate, having first taken physick and fasted. Towards morning on Wednesday the pain remitted. — Bozzy came to me, and much talk we had. I fasted another day; and on Wednesday night could walk tolerably. On Thursday, finding myself mending, I ventured on my dinner, which I think has a little interrupted my convalescence. To day I have again taken physick, and eaten only some stewed apples. I hope

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hope to starve it away. It is now no worse than it was at Brighthelmstone.

This, Madam, is the history of one of my toes; the history of my head would perhaps be much shorter. I thought it was the gout on Saturday. It has already lost me two dinners abroad, but then I have not been at much more charges, for I have eaten little at home.

Surely I shall have a letter to-morrow.

I am, &c.



LETTER CCXIII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

London, Oct. 11, 1779.

I THOUGHT it very long till I heard from you, having sent a second letter to Tunbridge, which I believe you cannot have received. I do not see why you should trouble yourself with physicians while Mr. Thrale grows better. Company and bustle will, I hope, complete his cure. Let him gallop over the Downs in the morning, call his friends about him to dinner, and frisk in the rooms at night, and outrun time and outface misfortune.

Notwithstanding all authorities against bleeding, Mr. Thrale bled himself well ten days ago.

You will lead a jolly life, and perhaps think little of me; but I have been invited twice to
Mrs.

Mrs. Vesley's conversation, but have not gone. The gout that was in my ankles when Queeney criticised my gait; passed into my toe, but I have hunted it, and starved it, and it makes no figure. It has drawn some attention, for Lord and Lady Lucan sent to enquire after me. This is all the news that I have to tell you. Yesterday I dined with Mr. Strahan, and Boswell was there. We shall be both to-morrow at Mr. Ramsay's. Now sure I have told you quite all, unless you yet want to be told that

I am, &c.

LETTER CCXIV.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

Oa. 16, 1779.

THE advice given you by Dr. Pepys agrees very exactly with my notions. I would not bleed but in exigencies. Riding and cheerfulness will, I hope, do all the business. All alive and merry, must be my master's motto.

How did' you light on your specifick for the tooth ach? You have now been troubled with it less. I am glad you are at last relieved.

You say nothing of the *younglings*; I hope they are not spoiled with the pleasures of Brighthelmstone, a dangerous place, we were told, for *children*. You will do well to keep them out of harm's way.

From

From the younglings let me pass to a veteran; you tell me nothing of Mr. S——; I hope he is well, and cheerful and communicative. Does Mr. Thrale go and talk with him, and do you run in and out? You may both be the better for his conversation.

I am sorry for poor Thomas, who was a decent and civil man. It is hard that he should be overwhelmed by a new-comer. But *thou by some other shalt be laid as low*. Bowen's day may come. A finer shop may be erected, kept by yet a fairer man, and crowded by greater numbers of fine gentlemen and fine ladies.

My foot gives me very little trouble; but it is not yet well. I have dined, since you saw me, not so often as once in two days. But I am told how well I look; and I really think I get more mobility. I dined on Tuesday with Ramsay, and on Thursday with Paoli, who talked of coming to see you, till I told him of your migration.

Mrs. Williams is not yet returned; but discord and discontent reign in my humble habitation as in the palaces of monarchs.—Mr. Levet and Mrs. Desmoulins have vowed eternal hate. Levet is the more insidious, and wants me to turn her out. Poor Williams writes word that she is no better, and has left off her physick. Mr. Levet has seen Dr. Lewis, who declares himself hopeless of doing her any good. Lawrence desponded some time ago.

I thought I had a little fever some time, but it seems to be starved away. Bozzy says, he never saw me so well. I hope you will say the same when you see me: methinks it will be pleasant to see you all—there is no danger of my forgetting you. Only keep or grow all well, and then I hope our meeting will be happy.

I am, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R CCXV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

October 21, 1779.

YOUR treatment of little * * * * was undoubtedly right; when there is so strong a reason against any thing as unconquerable terrour, there ought surely to be some weighty reason for it before it is done. But for putting into the water a child already well, it is not very easy to find any reason strong or weak. That the nurses fretted, will supply me during life with an additional motive to keep every child, as far as possible, out of a nurse's power. A nurse made of common mould will have a pride in overpowering a child's reluctance. There are few minds to which tyranny is not delightful; power is nothing but as it is felt, and the delight of superiority is proportionate to the resistance overcome.

I walked yesterday to Covent-garden, and feel to-day neither pain nor weakness. Send me, if you can, such an account of yourself and my master.

Sir Philip sent me word that he should be in town, but he has not yet called. Yesterday came Lady Lucan and Miss Bingham, and she said it was the first visit that she had paid.

Your new friend Mr. Bowen, who has sold fifty sets, had but thirty to sell, and I am afraid has yet a set or two for a friend. There is a great deal of fallacy in this world. I hope^d you do not teach the company wholly to forsake poor Thomas.

The

The want of company is an inconvenience, but Mr. Cumberland is a million. Make the most of what you have. Send my master out to hunt in the morning, and to walk the rooms in the evening; and bring him as active as a stag on the mountain, back to the borough. When he is in motion he is mending.

The young ones are very good in minding their book. If I do not make something of them, *'twill reflect upon me, as I knew not my trade*; for their parts are sufficiently known, and every body will have a better opinion of their industry than of mine. However, I hope when they come back, to accustom them to more lessons.

Your account of Mr. Scrase gives me no delight. He was a friend upon all occasions, whether assistance was wanted from the purse or the understanding. When he is gone, our barrier against calamity is weakened; and we must act with caution, or we shall be in more danger. Consult him, while his advice is yet to be had.

What makes C——— hate B———? D——— is indeed a rival, and can upon occasion *provoke a bugle*. But what has B——— done? Does he not like her look?

* * * * has passed one evening with me. He has made great discoveries in a library at Cambridge, and he finds so many precious materials, that his book must be a porter's load. He has sent me another sheet.

I am, dearest of all dear Ladies,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R

L E T T E R CCXVI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

London, Oct. 25, 1779.

LET me repair an injury done by misinformation to Mr. Bowen. He had at first indeed only thirty, that is, two shares; but he afterwards purchased two shares more. So all that he says I suppose is true.

On Saturday I walked to Dover-street, and back. Yesterday I dined with Sir Joshua. There was Mr. Elliot of Cornwall, who enquired after my master. At night I was bespoken by Lady Lucan; but she was taken ill, and the assembly was put off. I am to dine with Renny to-morrow.

I hope Mr. Thrale scours the country after the early horn, and at night flutters about the rooms, and once a-day makes a lusty dinner. I eat meat but once in two days, at most but four times a-week, reckoning several weeks together; for it is neither necessary nor prudent to be nice in regimen. Renny told me yesterday, that I look better than when she knew me first.

It is now past the postman's time, and I have no letter; and that is not well done, because I long for a letter; and you should always let me know whether you and Mr. Thrale, and all the rest, are or are not well. Do not serve me so often, because your silence is always a disappointment.

Some old gentlewomen at the next door are in very great distress. Their little annuity comes from Jamaica, and is therefore uncertain; and one of them has had a fall, and both are very

helpless; and the poor have you to help them. Persuade my master to let me give them something for him. It will be bestowed upon real want.

I hope all the younglings go on well, that the eldest are very prudent, and the rest very merry. We are to be merry but a little while; Prudence soon comes to spoil our mirth. Old times have bequeathed us a precept, to *be merry and wise*, but who has been able to observe it?

There is a very furious fellow writing with might and main against the life of Milton.

I am, &c



LETTER CCXVII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

London, Oct. 28, 1779.

SOME days before our last separation, Mr. Thrale and I had one evening an earnest discourse about the business with Mr. Scrase. For myself, you may be sure I am very willing to be useful; but surely all use of such an office is at a very great distance. Do not let those fears prevail which you know to be unreasonable; a will brings the end of life no nearer. But with this we will have done, and please ourselves with wishing my master *multos et felices*.

C—

C—— L—— accuses * * * * of making a party against her play. I always hissed away the charge, supposing him a man of honour; but I shall now defend him with less confidence. *Nequid nimis*. Horace says, that *Nil admirari* is the only thing that can make or keep a man happy. It is with equal truth the only thing that can make or keep a man honest. The desire of fame not regulated, is as dangerous to virtue as that of money. I hope C—— scorns his little malice.

I have had a letter for * * * , which I have inclosed. Do not lose it; for it contains a testimony that there may be some pleasure in this world; and that I may have a little of the little that there is, pray write to me. I thought your last letter long in coming.

The two younglings, what hinders them from writing to me. I hope they do not forget me.

Will Master give me any thing for my poor neighbours? I have had from Sir Joshua and Mr. Strahan; they are very old maids, very friendless and very helpless.

Mrs. Williams talks of coming home this week from Kingston, and then there will be *merry doings*.

I eat meat seldom, and take physick often, and fancy that I grow light and airy. A man that does not begin to grow light and airy at seventy, is certainly losing time, if he intends ever to be light and airy.

I dined on Tuesday with * * * and hope her little head begins to settle. She has, however, some scruples about the company of a lady whom she has lately known. I pacified her as well as I could. So no more at present; but hoping you are all in good health, as I am at this time of writing, (excuse haste)

I am, dearest dearest Lady,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCXVIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

London, Nov. 2, 1779.

THIS day I thought myself sure of a letter, but so I am constantly served. Mr. Cumberland and Mrs. * * * *, and Mrs. Byron, and any body else, puts me out of your head; and I know no more of you than if you were on the other side of the Caspian. I thought the two young things were to write too; but for them I do not much care.

On Saturday came home Mrs. Williams, neither better nor worse than when she went; and I dined at * * * * 's, and found them well pleased with their Italian journey. He took his Lady and son, and three daughters. They staid five months at Rome. They will have now something to talk of.

I gave my poor neighbour your half guinea, and ventured upon making it two guineas at my master's expence. Pray, Madam, how do I owe you half a guinea?

I dined on Sunday with Mr. Strahan, and have not been very well for some little time. Last night I was afraid of the gout, but it is gone to-day.

There was on Sunday night a fire at the north end of London-bridge, which has, they say, destroyed the water-work.

Does Mr. Thrale continue *to hunt in fields for health unbought*? If his taste of former pleasures returns, it is a strong proof of his recovery. When we meet, we will be jolly blades.

I know

I know not well how it has happened, but I have never yet been at the B——s. * * * * has called twice on me, and I have seen some more sheets—and away we go.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R C C I X.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

MADAM,

London, Nov. 4, 1779.

SO I may write, and write, and nobody care; but you can write often enough to Dr. Burney. Queeney sent me a pretty letter, to which * * * added a silly short note, in such a silly white hand, that I was glad it was no longer

I had heard before that * * * * had lost not only ten thousand, as you tell me, but twenty thousand, as you with great consistency tell Dr. Burney; but knowing that no man can lose what he has not, I took it little to heart. I did not think of borrowing; and indeed he that borrows money for adventures deserves to lose it. No man should put into a lottery more than he can spare. Neither D——, however, nor B—— have given occasion to his loss.

Notice

Notice is taken that I have a cold and a cough ; but I have been so long used to disorders so much more afflictive, that I have thought on them but little. If they grow worse, something should be done.

I hear from every body that Mr. Thrale grows better. He is *columen domus* ; and if he stands firm, little evils may be overlooked. Drive him out in a morning, lead him out at night, keep him in what bustle you can.

Do not neglect Scrase. You may perhaps do for him what you have done for * * *. The serious affair I do not wonder that you cannot mention ; and yet I wish it were transacted while Scrase can direct and superintend it. No other man, if he shall have the same skill and kindness, which I know not where to find, will have the same influence.

Sir Philip never called upon me, though he promised me to do it. Somebody else has laid hold upon him.

I live here in stark solitude. Nobody has called upon me this live-long day ; yet I comfort myself that I have no tortures in the night. I have not indeed much sleep ; but I suppose I have enough, for I am not as sleepy in the day-time as formerly.

I am, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R CCXX.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

London, Nov. 7, 1779.

POOOR Mrs. * * * *, I am glad that she runs to you at last for shelter. Give her, dear Madam, what comfort you can. Has any calamity fallen upon her? Her husband, so much as I hear, is well enough spoken of; nor it is supposed that he had power to do more than has been done. But life must have its end, and commonly an end of gloomy discontent, and lingering distress.

While you are vigorous and sprightly, you must take into your protection as many as you can of those who are tottering under their burden. When you want the same support, may you always find it.

I have for some time had a cough and a cold, but I did not mind it; continuance, however, makes it heavy; but it seems to be going away.

My master, I hope, hunts and walks, and courts the belles, and shakes Brighthelmston. When he comes back, frolick and active, we will make a feast, and drink his health, and have a noble day.

Of the Lucans I have never heard since. On Saturday, after having fasted almost all the week, I dined with Renny. For Wednesday I am invited by the * * * s, and if I am well, purpose to go. I imagine there will be a large company. The invitation is to dine and spend the evening. Too much at a time. I shall be in danger

ger of crying out, with Mr. Head, *catamaran*, whatever that may mean, for it seemed to imply tediousness and disgust. I do not much like to go, and I do not much like to stay away.

Have you any assemblies at this time of the year? and does Queeney dance? and does B—— dance too? I would have B—— dance with C——, and so make all up.

Discord keeps her residence in this habitation, but she has for some time been silent. We have much malice, but no mischief. Levet is rather a friend to Williams, because he hates Desmoulines more. A thing that he should hate more than Desmoulines, is not to be found.

I hear, but you never tell me any thing, that you have at last begun to bathe. I am sorry that your tooth-ach kept you out of the water so long, because I know you love to be in it.

If such letters as this were to cost you any thing, I should hardly write them; but since they come to you for nothing, I am willing enough to write, though I have nothing to say; because a sorry letter serves to keep one from dropping totally out of your head; and I would not have you forget that there is in the world such a poor being as, Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R CCXXI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

London, Nov. 8, 1779.

YOU are a dear dear lady. To write so often, and so sweetly, makes some amends for your absence. Your last letter came about half an hour after my last letter was sent away; but now I have another. You have much to tell me, and I have nothing to tell you; yet I am eager to write, because I am eager for your answer.

I thought C—— had told you his loss. If it be only report, I do not much credit it. Something perhaps he may have ventured, but I do not believe he had ten thousand pounds, or the means of borrowing it. Of B——, I suppose the fact is true, that he is gone; but for his loss, can any body tell who has been the winner? And if he has lost a sum disproportionate to his fortune, why should he run away when payment cannot be compelled?

Of Sir Thomas I can make no estimate; but if he is distressed, I am sorry; for he was in his prosperity civil and officious.

It has happened to ——, as to many active and prosperous men, that his mind has been wholly absorbed in business, or at intervals dissolved in amusement; and habituated so long to certain modes of employment or diversion, that in the decline of life it can no more receive a new train of images, than the hand can acquire dexterity in
a new

a new mechanical operation. For this reason a religious education is so necessary. Spiritual ideas may be recollected in old age, but can hardly be acquired.

You shall not hide Mrs. * * * * from me. For if she be a feeler, I can bear a feeler as well as you; and hope, that in tenderness for what she feels from nature, I am able to forgive or neglect what she feels by affectation. I pity her, as one in a state to which all must come; and I think well of her judgment in chusing you to be the depository of her troubles, and easer of her bosom. Fondle her, and comfort her.

Your letters have commonly one good paragraph concerning my master, who appears to you, and to every body, to mend upon the whole; though your vigilance perceives some accidental and temporary alterations, which, however, I am willing to hope are more rare and more flight than they were at first. Let him hunt much, and think little, and avoid solitude. I hope time has brought some company whom you can call now to your table. Does he take to ———? Does he love her as you profess to love ———? with a fifth part of the kindness that she has for me, I am well rewarded for what I have taught you of computation, by seeing our friendship divided into factions; so we stand, do we? as two to ten. A pretty appearance upon paper, and still prettier in the heart. Well—*go thy ways, old Jack.*

Of the capture of Jamaica nothing is known, nor do I think it probable or possible. How the French should in a few days take from us an island, which we could not in almost a century take from a few fugitive Negroes whom the Spaniards left behind them, is not easily imagined. If you stay much longer in Suffex, you may perhaps hear that London is taken.

We

We have a kind of epidemick cold amongst us, of which I have had my part, but not more than my part; and I think myself growing well. I have lived very sparingly, but shall have some dinner to-day; and Baretti dines with me.

I am, dearest Madam,

Your, &c.



L E T T E R CCXXII.

Mrs. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

Brighton, Nov. 11, 1779.

IT is a great pleasure to me, dear Sir, that you should be pleased with my correspondence; I hope there is approbation mixed with a partiality which does me infinite honour. I have know you prejudiced in favour of people you could not quite approve sometimes; but I would not have that be my case. You say true enough about our political fears, which magnify by mere distance from the capital, and paucity of conversation: not but that every one here has, I trust, domestick terrors enough to employ his thoughts as well as myself—but those are uneasinesses one cannot *talk* about, and 'tis therefore perhaps that we seek some common theme of lamentation, when all
may

may express concern, and be applauded by the rest for appearing to feel it. What an artificial life one does lead! and how sincerely one's heart revolts all day long against one's own conduct! Mr. Thrale's situation perpetually in my thoughts, is a subject on which no talk can be had even with you, yet what signifies dissembling so—I know his danger.

Poor Mrs. * * * * is past dissembling *her* cares, or their consequences, a ruined constitution: my master does not like her much, nor dislike her: he is all so gay now—*up among the boughs*, as Miss Owen calls it. We have many provincial phrases in her country and mine, that are more expressive than your fine finished English sentences. They will live too, I dare say, to the end of time, and see changes and losses affect the language with a variety of alterations, while they remain just where they always were—in the same manner as the turf monument on Marlborough Downs will outstand all the statues of Westminster Abbey.

I am sorry to hear that there is an influenza about the town again: What is the true reason of these contagious colds? I have heard men account for them, as being produced by a pestilential vapour broken out from some fissure of the earth in a distant region; but surely were that the case, one should hear accounts of its regular and marked progress over the continent, from which we are not so divided as to want intelligence of less important matters than these. What is plague in one country may, for aught I know, be influenza in another; however—do tell me when you write next.

I believe our friend ——— has lost something, notwithstanding your reasons to the contrary: one may reason one's self out of the belief of any thing, but I see the man looks all amazed
some-

somehow; and I feel as sure as if he had told me, that some great evil of the pecuniary kind has befallen him: if you will credit no illness till you see the patient panting for life, or no money lost till you read over his banker's book, much may be suffered by us all while you escape from the necessity of sympathizing, but we are ruining and dying all the time. Do you remember when Mr. Perkins told us of that fellow A——r, who would force us into a law-suit and then lost his cause—how I asked in what manner he looked? Why, says Perkins, *he looked like a man that was non-suited*. He would say much the same of Mr. —.

What shall I tell you next that is curious or entertaining, to keep up the liking you have to my letters? they are not very admirable from their profundity: I was reading the other day in some book, that Cardan was delighted in his old age to find that the letters he wrote in his youth were absolutely unintelligible even to himself, so recondite were the subjects of them, and so deep the erudition in which every sentiment was involved: the satisfaction with which we shall one day review our correspondence will be of a very different nature from his.

Lord Robert Manners told me a pretty story here one day, à propos to nothing in the world; but I liked it, and will tell it you: he would have willingly sworn to its truth. We were, says he, in the front of the battle at Fontenoy, when I observed my friend Honeywood endeavouring to cleave down a soldier of the enemy, but his hanger sticking fast in the shoulder, the fellow gained power to thrust him through the side with his bayonet, while another struck him on the head and face with a sabre, so that he immediately dropped: my attention being called away to annoy others and defend

defend myself; *I thought no more on't*: but next day, when the waggons were carrying off the wounded, I saw Honeywood on one of them, with half-a-dozen of soldiers lying a-top of him—Poor fellow, says I to myself, thou art done for now sure enough. But what was my surprise when we came to Hanau, in receiving a message, with Mr. Honeywood's compliments, and desired I would come and see his wounds dressed. I went directly—and now Bob look sharp, cries the gallant creature, and thou shalt see my brains; and Middleton the surgeon here shall bear witness that I have some.

Was not this a fine courageous fellow? We have a loss of Lord Robert; I loved his stories passionately; and if one is to expect truth and honour at all in this world, it is from an old general officer, with grey hair and crutches, who scorned falsehood in his youth, and must abhor it in his age.

I can chat no more though; my fears for Mr. Thrall are renewed by his behaviour; yet nothing has happened; it is the general manner that alarms me—Burn all this vagabonding nonsense, and think what should be done. Nay, *pray* be serious, I shall write you a very grave letter to-morrow: I am ashamed to think I could talk about any thing else *now*; but nobody apprehends any thing even at present, except

Your faithful servant,

H. L. THRALE.

And to me

The monster death keeps full in sight,
And puts the fairy hope to flight;
Blackens th' horizon all around,
And points to the abyss profound.

Farewell. Pray write soon and seriously—I am going to dear Mr. Scrase.

LETTER

L E T T E R CCXXIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM.

London, Nov. 16, 1779.

PRAY how long does a letter tarry between London and Brighthelmston? Your letter of the 12th I received on the 15th.

Poor Mrs. * * * * is a feeler. It is well that she has yet power to feel. Fiction durst not have driven upon a few months such a conflux of misery. Comfort her as you can.

I have looked again into your grave letter. You mention trustees. I do not see who can be trustee for a casual and variable property, for a fortune yet to be acquired. How can any man be trusted with what he cannot possess, cannot ascertain, and cannot regulate? The trade must be carried on by somebody, who must be answerable for the debts contracted. This can be none but yourself; unless you deliver up the property to some other agent, and trust the chance both of his prudence and his honesty. Do not be frightened; trade could not be managed by those who manage it, if it had much difficulty. Their great books are soon understood, and their language,

If speech it may be call'd, that speech is none
Distinguishable in number, mood, or tense,

is understood with no very laborious application.

The help which you can have from man as a trustee, you may have from him as a friend; the trusteeship may give him power to perplex, but
will

will neither increase his benevolence to assist, nor his wisdom to advise.

Living on God, and on thyself rely.

Who should be trustee but for you, for your own and your children's posterity? I hope this an end of this unpleasing speculation, and lighter matters may take their turn.

What Mr. Scrase says about the Borough is true, but is nothing to the purpose. A house in the square will not cost so much as building in Southwark; but buildings are more likely to go on in Southwark if your dwelling is at St. James's. Every body has some desire that deserts the great road of prosperity, to look for pleasure in a bye-path. I do not see with so much indignation Mr. Thrale's desire of being the first Brewer, as your despicable dread of living in the Borough. Ambition in little things, is better than cowardice in little things; but both these things, however little to the publick eye, are great in their consequences to yourselves. The world cares not how you brew, or where you live; but it is the business of tasting him. When he returns, let me see him frolick and airy, and social, and busy, and as kind to me as in former times.

You seem to be afraid that I should be starved before you come back. I have indeed practised abstinence with some stubbornness, and with some success; but as Dryden talks of *writing with a hat*, I am sometimes very witty with a knife and fork. I have managed myself very well; except that having no motive, I have no exercise.

At home we do not much quarrel; but perhaps the less we quarrel the more we hate. There is as much malignity amongst us as can well subsist, without any thoughts of daggers or poisons.

Mrs. ——— is by the help of frequent operations still kept alive; and such is the capricious destiny of mortals, that she will die more lamented by her husband, than I will promise to usefulness, wisdom, or sanctity. There is always something operating distinct from diligence or skill. Temple therefore in his composition of a hero, to the heroic virtues adds good fortune.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R CCXXIV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

London, Nov. 20, 1779.

INDEED, dear Madam, I do not think that you have any reason to complain of Mr. ———, or Mr. ———. What I proposed is, I suppose, unusual. However, Mr. Thrale knows that I have suggested nothing to you that I had not first said to him. I hear he grows well so fast, that we are not likely to try whose way is best; and I hope he will grow better, and better, and better; and then away with executors and executrixes. He may settle his family himself.

66 LETTERS TO AND FROM

I am not vexed at you for not liking the Borough, but for not liking the Borough better than other evils of greater magnitude. You must take physick; or be sick; you must live in the Borough, or live still worse.

Pray tell my Queeney how I love her for her letters; and tell Burney that now she is a good girl, I can love her again. Tell Mr. Scrase, that I am sincerely glad to hear that he is better. Tell my master, that I never was so glad to see him in my life, as I shall be now to see him well; and tell yourself, that except my master, nobody has more kindness for you, than,

Dear Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCXXV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST LADY,

April 6, 1779.

YOU had written so often. I have had but two letters from Bath, and the second complains that the first, which you call so many, was neglected, and you pretend to be afraid of being forgotten. I wonder what should put you out of my mind. You say rightly, that I shall not find such

such another ; for there is not, if I had the choice of all, such another to be found.

It is happy, both for you and Mrs. Montague, that the fates bring you both to Bath at the same time. Do not let new friends supplant the old ; they who first distinguished you have the best claim to your attention ; those who flock about you now, take your excellence upon credit, and may hope to gain upon the world by your countenance.

I have not quite neglected my Lives. Addison is a long one, but it is done. Prior is not short, and that is done too. I am upon Rowe, who cannot fill much paper. If I have done them before you come again, I think to bolt upon you at Bath ; for I shall not be now afraid of Mrs. Cotton. Let Burney take care that she does me no harm.

The diligence of Dr. Moisy I do not understand. About what is he diligent ? If Mr. Thrale is well, or only not well because he has been ill, I do not see what the physician can do. Does he direct any regimen, or does Mr. Thrale regulate himself ? Or is there no regularity among you ? Nothing can keep him so safe as the method which has been so often mentioned, and which will be not only practicable but pleasant in the Summer, and before Summer is quite gone, will be made supportable by custom.

If health and reason can be preserved by changing three or four meals a week, or if such a change will but encrease the chances of preserving them, the purchase is surely not made at a very high price. Death is dreadful, and fatuity is more dreadful, and such strokes bring both so near, that all their terrors ought to be felt. I hope that to our anxiety for him, Mr. Thrale will add some anxiety for himself.

Seward called on me one day, and read Spence. I dined yesterday at Mr. Jodrel's in a great deal of company. On Sunday I dine with Dr. Lawrence, and at night go to Mrs. Vesey. I have had a little cold, or two, or three, but I did not much mind them, for they were not very bad.

Make my compliments to my master, and Queeney, and Burney, and Mrs. Cotton, and to all that care about me, and more than all—or else.

Now one courts you, and another caresses you, and one calls you to cards, and another wants you to walk; and amidst all this, pray try to think now and then a little of me, and write often. Mrs. Strahan is at Bath; but, I believe, not well enough to be in the rooms.

I am, dearest Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R

L E T T E R CCXXVI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

ON Sunday I dined with poor Lawrence, who is deafer than ever. When he was told that Dr. Moisy visited Mr. Thrale, he enquired, for what? and said that there was nothing to be done, which Nature would not do for herself. On Sunday evening I was at Mrs. Vesey's, and there was enquiry about my master, but I told them all good. There was Dr. Barnard of Eton, and we made a noise all the evening; and there was Pepys, and Wraxal till I drove him away. And I have no loss of my mistress, who laughs, and frisks, and frolicks it all the long day, and never thinks of poor Colin.

If Mr. Thrale will but continue to mend, we shall, I hope, come together again, and do as good things as ever we did; but perhaps you will be made too proud to heed me, and yet, as I have often told you, it will not be easy for you to find such another.

Queeney has been a good girl, and wrote me a letter; if Burney said she would write, she told you a fib. She writes nothing to me. She can write home fast enough. I have a good mind not to let her know, that Dr. Bernard, to whom I had recommended her novel, speaks of it with great commendation; and that the copy which she lent me, has been read by Dr. Lawrence three times over. And yet what a gypsey it is. She no more
minds

minds me, than if I were a Brangton. Pray speak to Queeney to write again.

I have had a cold and a cough, and taken opium, and think I am better. We have had very cold weather ; bad riding weather for my master, but he will surmount it all. Did Mrs. Browne make any reply to your comparison of business with solitude, or did you quite down her ? I am much pleased to think that Mrs. Cotton thinks me worth a frame, and a place upon her wall. Her kindness was hardly within my hope, but time does wonderful things. All my fear is, that if I should come again, my print would be taken down. I fear I shall never hold it.

Who dines with you ? Do you see Dr. Woodward or Dr. Harrington ? Do you go to the house where they write for the myrtle ? You are at all places of high resort, and bring home hearts by dozens ; while I am seeking for something to say about men of whom I know nothing but their verses, and sometimes very little of them. Now I have begun, however, I do not despair of making an end. Mr. Nicholls holds that Addison is the most *taking* of all that I have done. I doubt they will not be done before you come away.

Now you think yourself the first writer in the world for a letter about nothing. Can you write such a letter as this ? So miscellaneous, with such noble disdain of regularity ; like Shakespeare's works, such graceful negligence of transition, like the ancient enthusiasts ? The pure voice of nature and of friendship. Now of whom shall I proceed to speak ? Of whom but Mrs. Montague ? Having mentioned Shakespeare and Nature, does not the name of Montague force itself upon me ? Such were the transitions of the ancients, which now seem abrupt, because the intermediate idea is lost to modern understandings. I wish her name had
connected

connected itself with friendship; but, ah Colin, thy hopes are in vain. One thing however is left me, I have still to complain; but I hope I shall not complain much while you have any kindness for me. I am,

Dearest and dearest Madam,

Your, &c.

London, April 11, 1780.

You do not date your letters.



L E T T E R CCXXVII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST MADAM,

April 15, 1780.

I DID not mistake Dr. Woodward's case; nor should have wanted any explanation. But broken is a very bad word in the city.

Here has just been with me * * * *, who has given—What has he given? Nothing, I believe, gratis. He has given fifty seven lessons this week. Surely this is business.

I thought to have finished Rowe's life to-day, but I have five or six visitors who hindered me; and I have not been quite well. Next week I hope to dispatch four or five of them.

It

It is a great delight to hear so much good of all of you. Fanny tells me good news of you, and you speak well of Fanny; and all of you say what one would wish of my master. And my sweet Queeney, I hope is well. Does she drink the waters? *One glass* would do her as much good as it does her father.

You and Mrs. M—— must keep Mrs. * * * * about you; and try to make a wit of her. She will be a little unskilful in her first essays; but you will see how precept and example will bring her forwards.

Surely it is very fine to have your powers. The wits court you, and the Methodists love you, and the whole world runs about you; and you write me word how well you can do without me: and so, go thy ways, poor Jack.

That sovereign *glass of water* is the great medicine; and though his legs are too big, yet my master takes a glass of water. This is bold practice. I believe, under the protection of a glass of water drank at the pump, he may venture once a-week upon a stew'd lamprey.

I wish you all good; yet know not what to wish you which you have not. May all good continue and increase.

I am, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R CCXXVIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

London, April 18, 1780.

OF the petticoat government I had never heard. Of the Shakespeare, I was once told by Miss Lawrence; and that is all that I know of it. I have not seen nor heard of any body that has seen the wonders. You may be sure I should tell you any thing that would gratify your curiosity, and furnish you for your present expences, of intellectual entertainment. But of this dramatic discovery I know nothing.

I cannot see but my master may with stubborn regularity totally recover. But surely, though the invasion has been repelled from life, the waste it has made will require some time and much attention to repair it. You must not grow weary of watching him, and he must not grow impatient of being watched.

Pray, of what wonders do you tell me? You make verses, and they are read in publick, and I know nothing about them. This very crime, I think, broke the link of amity between Richardson and Miss M——, after a tenderness and confidence of many years. However, you must do a great deal more before I leave you for Lucan or Montague, or any other charmer; if any other charmer would have me.

I am sorry that you have seen Mrs. W——. She and her husband exhibited two very different appearances of human nature. But busy, busy, still art thou. He prevailed on himself to treat her

her with great tenderness; and to show how little sense will serve for common life, she has passed through the world with less imprudence than any of her family.

Sir Philip's bill has been rejected by the Lords. There was, I think, nothing to be objected to it, but the time at which it was proposed, and the intention with which it was projected. It was fair in itself, but tended to weaken government when it is too weak already.

* * * * * has no business about you, but to be taught. Poor B———'s tenderness is very affecting. Comfort her all you can. I sincerely wish her well. Declining life is a very awful scene.

Please to tell Mr. Thrale, that I think I grow rather less; and that I was last week almost dizzy with vacuity. I repeat my challenge to alternate diet; and doubt not but both of us, by adhering to it, may live more at ease, and a much longer time.

Though I am going to dine with Lady Craven,

I am, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R CCXXIX.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

• **M**R. E—— and Mr. P—— called on me to-day with your letter to the electors, and another which they had drawn up, to serve in its place. I thought all their objections just, and all their alterations proper. You had mentioned his sickness in terms which give his adversaries advantage, by confirming the report which they already spread with great industry, of his infirmity and inability. You speak, in their opinion, and in mine, with too little confidence in your own interest. By fearing, you teach others to fear. All this is now avoided, and it is to take its chance.

How do you think I live? On Thursday I dined with Hamilton, and went thence to Mrs. Ord. On Friday, with much company at Reynolds's. On Saturday, at Dr. Bell's. On Sunday, at Dr. Burney's, with your two sweets from Kensington, who are both well; at night came Mrs. Ord, Mr. Harris, and Mr. Greville, &c. On Monday, with Reynolds, at night with Lady Lucan; to-day with Mr. Langton; to-morrow with the Bishop of St. Asaph; on Thursday with Mr. Bowles; Friday, —; Saturday, at the Academy; Sunday, with Mr. Ramsay.

I told Lady Lucan how long it was since she sent to me; but she said I must consider how the world rolls about her. She seemed pleased that we met again.

The

The long intervals of starving I do not think best for Mr. Thrale, nor perhaps for myself, but I knew not how to attain any thing better; and every body tells me that I am very well, and I think there now remains not much cause for complaint: but O for a glass, once in four-and-twenty hours, of warm water! Can warm water be had only at Bath, as steam was to be found only at Knightsbridge? Nature distributes her gifts, they say, variously, to show us that we have need of one another; and in her bounty she bestowed warm water upon Bath, and condemned the inhabitants of other places, if they would warm their water, to make a fire. I would have the young ladies take half a glass every third day, and walk upon it.

I not only scour the town from day to day, but many visitors come to me in the morning; so that my work makes no great progress, but I will try to quicken it. I should certainly like to bustle a little among you, but I am unwilling to quit my post till I have made an end.

You did not tell me in your last letter how Mr. Thrale goes on. If he will be *ruled, for aught appears, he may live on these hundred years*. Fix him when he comes in alternate diet.

I am, dearest Lady,

Your, &c.

London, April 25, 1780.

Now there is a date; look at it.

LETTER

L E T T E R CCXXX.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST MADAM,

MR. Thrale never will live abstinently, till he can persuade himself to abstain by rule. I lived on potatoes on Friday, and on spinach to-day; but I have had, I am afraid, too many dinners of late. I took physick too both days, and hope to fast to-morrow. When he comes home, we will shame him, and Jebb shall scold him into regularity. I am glad, however, that he is always one of the company, and that my dear Queeney is again another. Encourage, as you can, the musical girl.

Nothing is more common than mutual dislike where mutual approbation is particularly expected. There is often on both sides a vigilance not over benevolent; and as attention is strongly excited, so that nothing drops unheeded, any difference in taste or opinion, and some difference where there is no restraint will commonly appear, it immediately generates dislike.

Never let criticisms operate upon your face or your mind; it is very rarely that an author is hurt by his criticks. The blaze of reputation cannot be blown out, but it often dies in the socket; a very few names may be considered as perpetual lamps that shine unconsumed. From the author of Fitzosborne's Letters I cannot think myself in much danger. I met him only once about thirty years ago, and in some small dispute reduced him to whistle; having not seen him

since, that is the last impression. Poor Moore the fabulist was one of the company.

Mrs. Montague's long stay, against her own inclination, is very convenient. You would, by your own confession, want a companion; and she is *par pluribus*, conversing with her you may find *variety in one*.

At Mrs. Ord's I met one Mrs. B——, a travelled lady, of great spirit, and some consciousness of her own abilities. We had a contest of gallantry an hour long, so much to the diversion of the company, that at Ramsay's last night, in a crowded room, they would have pitted us again. There were Smelt, and the Bishop of St. Asaph, who comes to every place; and Lord Monboddo, and Sir Joshua, and ladies out of tale.

The exhibition, how will you do, either to see or not to see! The exhibition is eminently splendid. There is contour, and keeping, and grace, and expression, and all the varieties of artificial excellence. The apartments were truly very noble. The pictures, for the sake of a sky light, are at the top of the house; there we dined, and I sat over against the Archbishop of York. See how I live when I am not under petticoat government.

I am, &c.

London, May 1, 1780.

Mark that—you did not put the year to your last.

LETTER

L E T T E R CCXXXI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

MADAM, Bok-court, Fleet-street, May 7, 1780.

MR. P—— has just been with me, and has talked much talk, of which the result is, that he thinks your presence necessary for a few days. I have not the same fulness of conviction; but your appearance would certainly operate in your favour, and you will judge better what measures of diligence and of expence are necessary. Money, Mr. P—— says, must be spent; and he is right in wishing that you be made able to judge how far it is spent properly. Perhaps, it is but perhaps, some desire that I have of seeing you, makes me think the better of his reasons. Can you leave Master? Can you appoint Mrs. —— governess? If you can, the expence of coming is nothing, and the trouble not much; and therefore it were better gratify your agents. Levy behaves well.

I dined on Wednesday with Mr. Fitzmaurice, who almost made me promise to pass part of the Summer at Llewenny. To-morrow I dine with Mrs. Southwel; and on Thursday with Lord Lucan. To-night I go to Miss Monkton's. Thus I scramble, when you do not quite shut me up; but I am miserably under petticoat government, and yet am not weary, nor much ashamed.

Pray

80 LETTERS TO AND FROM

Pray tell my two dear girls that I will write to both of them next week; and let Burney know that I was *so* angry——

I am, &c.

I know of Mrs. Desmouline's letter. It will be a great charity.

Let me know when you are to come.



L E T T E R CCXXXII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Bolt-court, Fleet-street,
May 8, 1780.

WOULD you desire better sympathy—At the very time when you were writing, I was answering your letter.

Having seen nobody since I saw Mr. P——, I have little more to say, than when I wrote last. My opinion is, that you should come for a week, and shew yourself, and talk in high terms; for it will certainly be propagated with great diligence, that you despair and desist; and to those that declare the contrary, it will be answered; Why then do they not appear? To this no reply can be made that will keep your friends in countenance. A little bustle and a little ostentation will put a stop to clamours, and whispers, and suspicions of your friends,

friends, and calumnies of your opponents. Be brisk, and be splendid, and be publick. You will probably be received with much favour; and take from little people the opportunity which your absence gives them of magnifying their services, and exalting their importance. You may have more friends and fewer obligations.

It is always necessary to shew some good opinion of those whose good opinion we solicit. Your friends solicit you to come; if you do not come, you make them less your friends, by disregarding their advice. Nobody will persist long in helping those that will do nothing for themselves.

The voters of the Borough, are too proud and too little dependant to be solicited by deputies; they expect the gratification of seeing the candidate bowing or curtesying before them. If you are proud, they can be sullen.

Such is the call for your presence; what is there to withhold you? I see no pretence for hesitation. Mr. Thrale certainly shall not come; and yet somebody must appear whom the people think it worth the while to look at.

Do not think all this while that I want to see you.—I dine on Thursday at Lord Lucan's, and on Saturday at Lady Craven's; and I dined yesterday with Mrs. Southwel.

As to my looks at the Academy, I was not told of them; and as I remember, I was very well, and I am well enough now, and am,

Dearest Lady,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCXXIII.

Mrs. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

MY DEAR SIR,

May 9,

WHEN did I ever plague you about contour, and grace, and expression? I have dreaded them all three since that hapless day at Compeigne, when you seized me so; and Mr. Thrale made what I hoped would have proved a lasting peace; but French ground is unfavourable to fidelity perhaps; and so now you begin again: after having taken five years breath, you might have done more than this.—Say another word, and I will bring up afresh the history of your exploits at St. Denys, and how cross you were for nothing—but some how or other, our travels never make any part either of our conversation or correspondence. I am willing to shew myself in Southwark, or in any place, for my master's pleasure or advantage; but have no present conviction that to be re-elected would be advantageous, so shattered a state as his nerves are in just now—Do not you, however, fancy for a moment, that I shrink from fatigue—or desire to escape from doing my duty;—spiting one's antagonist is a reason that never ought to operate, and never does operate with me: I care nothing about a rival candidate's innuendos, I care only about my husband's health and fame; and if we find that he earnestly wishes to be once more member for the Borough—he *shall* be member, if any thing done or suffered by me will help to make him so—This P—— and E——, and all the inhabitants of the Borough, friends and foes, are perfectly

fectly persuaded of, whatever they may say. I shall leave his daughter governess when I quit Bath, if to quit it will be really wise—a better can he never have.

Mrs. Desmoulines has written, as we say, *ad-
dishly*; but since she asked your leave, &c. it is well enough. The anecdote at Mrs. Ord's is exceeding good:—I only wish I had been present to hear such a conversation. Mr. Fitzmaurice is always civilier both to you and me, than either of us deserve.—I wonder (as the phrase is) what he sees in us?—Not much politeness surely.

The Lives will be admirable, but we will talk of them another time: it is not author's criticism ever, or rival's malignity, that gives lasting pain.

Thy tooth is not so keen, &c.

One friend's unkindness is harder to bear than the wisest, and justest, and hardest censures of all the wits and scholars put together; besides, that the venom of the viper is restorative—I remember your telling me once that Doctor Nugent always squeezed the bag into his basin of broth while he was sick—But if the *gens a talents*, as the French call them, agree to hate *me*, the Methodists love *you*, says my dear Mr. Johnson. I do hope that my amiable friend Mrs. Browne *does* love me, I mean with distinction; for her sweet philanthropy inclines her to love and benefit the whole human race:—Why she should, however, be called a Methodist, you must tell—for 'tis considered always a term of reproach, I trust, because I never yet did hear that any one person called himself a Methodist. The lady we are now speaking of is a pious; charitable, peaceful Christian, who at thirty years old, though elegant in her person, and high in health and fortune, resolved upon leading a

G 2single

single life, that she might the better and the easier dedicate her thoughts to God, and her money to such of his poor creatures who might want it. Our theatres in those days were, I believe, but coarsely provided—and sometimes suffered scenes to be exhibited upon them, gross enough to wound a delicacy more blunted than her's—so she resolved to go no more herself; and by uttering her notions of stage immorality, endeavoured to keep away as many acquaintance as she could. I heard her one evening throw out a pretty thought, and for aught I can recollect, a new one too, concerning the death of some gay frisker here at Bath, where such lives and such deaths are common.

The closing hours of a mere pleasure hunting mortal, said she, remind me of what I recollect of a theatre when the play is done: all smoke, and stink of candles ill-extinguished, a confused crowd half lost in darkness, with women's screams from time to time heard at the door -- horrible contrast to the gay show immediately preceding:—dismal end of a fabulous representation—gloomy conclusion of an airy and fantastic dream. Such a talker you see would not be easily *down'd*, as we call it, by my little whimsical comparison between solitude and society.

Well! but if you please we will speak seriously upon the subject—for I had a grave conversation with her about it again yesterday, on her expressing an earnest wish that Mr. Thrale would forego this foolish electioneering business, quit the world at once, and think only on his present health and future hopes. Was every one to do so, Madam, said I, upon the first attack of severe sickness, would it be right? besides, that there are vices peculiar to living alone, as there are others consequent upon commercial, or in any way tumultuous life; and I believe that the same intellectual regimen will no
more

more suit all souls, than that the same diet will agree with all constitutions. Retirement, like the Sabbath, was made for man, not man for retirement; he who by nature or habit feels himself giddy, wild, and dissipated, would be prudent in seeking his cure from silent contemplation; but a fullen or sensual person is likely to find fewer incitements to *his* favourite crimes in a crowd.

They who converse freely with recluses, have heard strange tales of our arch-enemy's diligence even within convent walls; and though my dear Mr. Johnson is justly enraged at the present spirit of irreverent rapacity which seeks to overthrow places once consecrated to religious retirement—he is, I believe, himself persuaded that the retreats of piety were often too slight a shelter from gross temptations; and that many mortals of each sex have retired to worse sins than those they left behind them in the world.

The danger of this age and nation is all on the other side to be sure—and so far I granted to Mrs. Browne:—but 'tis silly to live like the one-eyed doe in little Susan's fable-book, without knowing there is also danger on the other.

So here is a counterpart to the famous fellow who made himself immortal, by reading a military lecture to Hannibal; yet I really repent no part of the conversation or letter—and am almost sure you will approve the sentiments.

Shall we have some chat about the Lives now? that of Blackmore will be very entertaining I dare say, and he will be rescued from the old wits who worried him, much to your disliking: so a little for love of his Christianity, a little for love of his physick, a little for love of his courage—and a little for love of contradiction, you will save him from his malevolent criticks, and perhaps do him

him the honour to devour him yourself—as a lion is said to take a great bull now and then from the wolves which had fallen upon him in the desert, and gravely eat him up for his own dinner.

Here must end our correspondence for a while. Let me see you at the Borough-house as soon as I get there: every body says I must come up directly, and my master urges me, and I am going to arrange matters for my departure.—If I possess any of the wonderful powers you compliment me with, let me exert them now. Dear Sir Philip will lend me his valuable assistance—it will not on this occasion be *invaluable*, respected as he is by his own party. Here are letters come to call me to London—and they shall not find me dilatory now, nor lazy when I am arrived. Pray meet me, and add your counsel to our activity. Mrs. D—— will be my *douce compagne* upon the occasion, and every friend will bustle for poor dear Mr. Thrale this *one* time more! He shall, say you, bustle for himself the next time, and need none of us. Well, so he shall for aught I know; he is quite pert to-day, and so is

Your ever faithful, and

obliged servant,

H. L. THRALE.

LETTER

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

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LETTER CCXXXIV.

To Mrs. THRALE.

Bolt-court, Fleet-street,
London, May 9, 1780.

DEAR MADAM,

THIS morning brought me the honour of a visit from Sir Philip, who has been to survey Streatham, and thinks it will be long before you can return thither; which he considers as a loss to himself of many pleasant days which your residence might have afforded. We then talked about our mistress, and ———; and I said you had most wit, and most literature.

Mr. Evans brought me your letter, to which I had already sent the answer; nor have I any thing to add, but that the more I reflect, and the more I hear, the more I am convinced of the necessity of your presence. Your adversaries will be for ever saying, that you despair of success, or disdain to obtain it by the usual sollicitation. Either of these suppositions generally received ruins your interest, and your appearance confutes both.

Cette Anne si belle,
Qu'on vante si fort,
Pourquoi ne vient t'elle,
Vraiment elle a tort.

While you stay away your friends have no answer to give,

Mr. P——, as I suppose you know, has refused to join with H——, and is thought to be in more danger than Mr. Thrale.

Of

Of ———'s letter, I would have you not take any notice; he is a man of no character.

My Lives creep on. I have done Addison, Prior, Rowe, Granville, Sheffield, Collins, Pitt, and almost Fenton. I design to take Congreve next into my hand. I hope to have done before you can come home, and then whither shall I go?

What comes of my dear, sweet, charming, lovely, pretty, little Queeney's learning? This is a sad long interruption, and the wicked world will make us no allowance, but will call us——

Lady Lucan says, she hears Queeney is wonderfully accomplished, and I did not speak ill of her.

Did I tell you that Scot and Jones both offer themselves to represent the University in the place of Sir Roger Newdigate. They are struggling hard for what others think neither of them will obtain.

I am not grown fat. I did thrive a little, but I checked the pernicious growth, and am now small as before.

I am, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R CCXXXV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E,

DEAR MADAM,

May 23, 1780.

YOUR letter told me all the good news. Mr. Thrale well, Queeney good, and yourself not so ill but that you know how to be made well; and now ——— is gone, you have the sole and undivided empire of Bath; and you talk to many whom you cannot make wiser, and enjoy the foolish face of praise.

But ——— and you have had, with all your adulations, nothing finer said of you than was said last Saturday night of Burke and me. We were at the Bishop of ———'s, a bishop little better than *your* bishop; and towards twelve we fell into talk, to which the ladies listened, just as they do to you; and said, as I heard, *there is no rising unless somebody will cry fire.*

I was last night at Miss Monkton's; and there were Lady Craven and Lady Cranburne, and many ladies and few men. Next Saturday I am to be at Mr. Pepys's, and in the intermediate time am to provide for myself as I can.

You cannot think how doggedly I left your house on Friday morning, and yet Mrs. Abbe's gave me some mushrooms; but what are mushrooms without my mistress?

My master has seen his hand-bill; will he stand to it? I have not heard a word from the Borough since you went away.

Dr.

Dr. Taylor is coming hastily to town, that he may drive his lawsuit forward. He seems to think himself very well. This lawsuit will keep him in exercise, and exercise will keep him well. It is to be wished that the law may double its delays. If Dr. Wilson dies, he will take St. Margaret's, and then he will have the bustle of the parish to amuse him. I expect him every day.

I am, dear Lady,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R C C X X X V I .

Mrs. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

DEAR SIR,

May.

I AM glad my letter was so good a one. I can certainly say nothing too good of Mr. Thrale, for seemingly pleased that I had done what it is was my indispensable duty to do, or of his daughter for behaving so sweetly in my absence. We found engagements out of number to be complied with; the first was a concert at the Dean of Offory's (I like his lady violently), and that vexed me, because my looks were not recovered; and so I shone at the *Crescent* like a *pale moon* indeed.

Here is every thing in this pretty town of Bath—every thing possible; good and bad, for what I see.

ses. Did we tell you when we were in London the other day, how Miss Burney picked up a female infidel one morning, and bid her read *Rasselas*; and how I lighted on a fanatic, and bid her read *Rasselas*? Perhaps not, for you only call such intelligence flattery; though the London wits beat us at that too, when they talk of crying fire in the street, that they may break up a conversation which would otherwise engage them till next day. All this, however, we set on one side during the election hurry. My master will stand to his hand-bill; he *likes* it: and I like exceedingly your sudden removal from the *round tower*, where mushrooms would almost grow of themselves now, the weather is getting so hot. Our flagstones upon the South Parade burn one's feet through one's shoes; but the Bath belles, fearless of *fire ordeal*, trip about, secure in cork soles and a clear conscience. I wish though, that you would put in a word of your own to Mr. Thrale about eating less; for he will mind you more than us, and his too great spirits at this moment fright me. Oh, here comes Dr. Moysey, to talk about Whig and Tory, and the reign of King Charles the Second; how that style of conversation does wear one out, especially from a professional man, and when one is wishing to bring forward a subject really interesting. It would be a choice comfort to me if the people would agree to hate dissention, and love one another, and mind their business, and hang the politics. I am sure I had plague enough with such stuff at the Borough, no need to be pursued with it here. Talk to Lawrence if you can commodiously, and let me know the result—I think the *one* glass of water which you scorn so has an effect, and that effect not a good one—it gives dizziness; but there is no immediate harm coming, our Doctors say.

How

How does Congreve's life turn out? Tell me all the news. I would not wish you to be *too much* flattered: milk itself, when injected into the veins, is poison, the wise men say; so if adulation should be *forced* upon you, cry out, or run away to *me*, or any thing; but I expect these Lives to be very clever things after all, take as little pains with them as you can: we will have all the great prose writers some time, and then I shall be zealous for Bacon.

Mean time, Heaven send this Southwark election safe, for a disappointment would half kill my husband; and there is no comfort in tiring every friend to death in such a manner, and losing the town at last. How charmingly kind that dear Mr. Devaynes behaved. Well! it was really clever management to carry Sir Philip and him about together so, at a time when they disagreed concerning every subject except serving me; and how excessively agreeable they made themselves that day we dined in St. John's! and how sweet it was to see them united closely in a cause of private friendship! *All my doings*, says your boastful mistress; but I know that water, though the most insipid of all bodies, is the only thing which gives cohesion to every other; and which alone can unite the most heterogeneous substances.

I have no care about enjoying undivided empire, nor any thoughts of disputing it with Mrs. ———. She considers her title as indisputable most probably, though I am sure I never heard her urge it. Queen Elizabeth, you remember, would not suffer her's to be enquired into ——— and I have read somewhere that the Great Mogul is never crowned.

How shall I fill up the other side of the sheet? With a date, if you please; but it will, upon re-consideration,

consideration, reach but a little way, so we had as good finish here, and say how much

I am, &c.

H. L. THRALE.

I have got some new matter ; Burney has just shewn me a fine letter from a fine letter-writer, *all about you*, requesting one body to request another body to request of you, that you will read a manuscript play composed by I know not who : the fears, and delicacies, and daintifications of whom filled four sides of a folio paper. I looked grave, and thought how diligently you would peruse it, how hard you would study it, and what marginal notes you would make—for though they don't insist on criticism, they'll admit it. So much for them ; but I have used Mrs. Byrom very ill in not naming her to you, when her partiality is such, that she quarrelled with a friend for denying you *elegance of manner* here one day, though the lady had really granted you in the course of conversation almost every other attainable excellence : but now that Mr. Tasker has compared you to Venus, we will wonder at nothing.

A-propos to gallantry, here is a gentleman hooted out of Bath for shewing a lady's love letters to him ; and such is the resentment of all the females, that even the house-maid refused to make his bed. I think them perfectly right, as he has broken all the common ties of society ;
and

and if he were to sleep on straw for half a year instead of our old favourites the Capuchin friars, it would do him no harm, and set the men a good example.

Adieu, Dear Sir, all goes pretty well with us ; but do speak to Dr. Lawrence about that vertiginous sensation which I fancy is occasioned by the water. We heard of it only once though.

L E T T E R C C X X X V I I .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

DEAR MADAM,

HERE has been Dr. Lawrence with me, and I showed him your letter ; and you may easily believe we had some talk about my master. He said, however, little that was new, except this, which is of great importance, that if ever he feels any uncommon sensation in his head, such as, heaviness, pain, or noise, or giddiness, he should have immediate recourse to some evacuation, and thinks a cathartick most eligible. He told me a case of a lady, who said she felt a dizziness, and would bleed ; to bleed, however, she neglected, and in a few days the dizziness became an apoplexy. He says, but do not tell it, that the use of Bath water, as far as it did any thing, did mischief. He presses abstinence very strongly, as that which must do all that can be done ; and recommends

commends the exercise of walking, as tending more to extenuation than that of riding.

——— has let out another pound of blood, and is come to town, brisk and vigorous, fierce and fell, to drive on his lawsuit. Nothing in all life now can be more *profligate* than what he is; and if, in case, that so be, that they persist for to resist him, he is resolved not to spare no money, nor no time. He is, I believe, thundering away. His solicitor has turned him off; and I think it not unlikely that he will tire his lawyers. But now don't you talk.

My dear Queeny, what a good girl she is. Pray write to me about her, and let me know her progress in the world. Bath is a good place for the initiation of a young lady. She can neither become negligent for want of observers, as in the country; nor by the imagination that she lies concealed in the crowd, as in London. Lady Lucan told me, between ourselves, how much she had heard of Queeny's accomplishments; she must therefore now be careful, since she begins to have the public eye upon her.

A lady has sent me a vial, like Mrs. Nesbit's vial, of essence of roses. What am I come to?

Congreve, whom I dispatched at the Borough while I was attending the election, is one of the best of the little lives; but then I had your conversation.

You seem to suspect that I think you too earnest about the success of your solicitation: if I gave you any reason for that suspicion, it was without intention. It would be with great discontent that I should see Mr. Thrale decline the representation of the Borough, and with much greater should I see him ejected. To sit in Parliament for Southwark, is the highest honour that his station permits him to attain; and his ambition to attain it, is

is surely rational and laudable. I will not say that for an honest man to struggle for a vote in the legislature, at a time when honest votes are so much wanted, is absolutely a duty, but it is surely an act of virtue. The expence, if it was more I should wish him to despise. Money is made for such purposes as this. And the method to which the trade is now brought, will, I hope, save him from any want of what he shall now spend.

Keep Mr. Thrale well, and make him keep himself well, and put all other care out of your dear head.

Sir Edward Littleton's business with me was to know the character of a candidate for a school at Brewood in Staffordshire; to which, I think, there are seventeen pretenders.

Do not I tell you every thing? what wouldst thou more of man? It will, I fancy, be necessary for you to come up once again at least, to fix your friends and terrify your enemies. Take care to be informed, as you can, of the ebb or flow of your interest; and do not lose at Capua the victory of Cannæ. I hope I need not tell you, dear Madam, that

I am, &c.

Thursday May 25, 1780.

No. 8. Bolt-court, Fleet-street, London.

Look at this, and learn.

LETTER CCXXXVIII.

To Mr. THRALE.

DEAR SIR,

London, May 30, 1780.

YOU never desired me to write to you, and therefore cannot take it amiss that I have never written. I once began a letter, in which I intended to exhort you to resolute abstinence; but I rejoice now that I never sent, nor troubled you with advice which you do not want. The advice that is wanted is commonly unwelcome, and that which is not wanted is evidently impertinent.

The accounts of your health, and of your caution, with which I am furnished by my mistress, are just such as would be wished, and I congratulate you on your power over yourself, and on the success with which the exercise of that power has been hitherto rewarded. Do not remit your care; for in your condition it is certain, that security will produce danger.

You always used to tell me, that we could never eat too little; the time is now come to both of us, in which your position is verified. I am really better than I have been for twenty years past; and if you persist in your present laudable practice, you may live to tell your great grandchildren the advantages of abstinence.

I have been so idle, that I know not when I shall get either to you, or to any other place; for my resolution is to stay here till the work is finished, unless some call more pressing than I think likely to happen should summon me away.

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H

Taylor,

98 L E T T E R S T O A N D F R O M

Taylor, who is gone away brisk and jolly, asked me when I would come to him, but I could not tell him. I hope, however, to see standing corn in some part of the earth this Summer, but I shall hardly smell hay, or suck clover flowers.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R. CCXXXIX.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

YO U mistake about Dr. Taylor's claim upon the Abbey; the prebends are equal, but the senier prebendary has his choice of the livings that are in the gift of the chapter, of which St. Margaret's is one; which if Wilson dies, he may take if he pleases. He went home lusty and stout; having bustled ably about his lawsuit, which at last, I think, he will not get.

Mr. Thrale, you say, was pleased to find that I wish him well; which seems therefore to be a new discovery. I hoped he had known for many a year past that nobody can wish him better. It is strange to find that so many have heard of his fictitious relapse, and so few of his continual recovery.

And you think to run me down with the Bishop and Mrs. Carter, and Sir James; and I know not whether

ther you may not win a heat, now the town grows empty. Mrs. Vesey suspects still that I do not love them since that *skrimage*. But I baffle pretty well, and shew myself here and there, and do not like to be quite lost. However, I have as many invitations to the country as you; and I do not mind your breakfasts, nor your evenings.

Langton is gone to be an engineer at Chatham; and I suppose you know that Jones and Scot oppose each other for what neither will have.

If Mr. Thrale at all remits his vigilance, let the Doctor loose upon him. While he is watched he may be kept from mischief, but he never can be safe without a rule; and no rule will he find equal to that which has been so often mentioned, of an alternate diet; in which, at least in this season of vegetation, there is neither difficulty nor hardship.

I am, dearest Madam,

Your, &c.

London, No. 8. Bolt-court, Fleet-street,
June 6, 1780.

Mind this, and tell Queeney.



L E T T E R CCXL.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

London, June 9, 1780.

TO the question, Who was impressed with consternation? it may with great truth be answered, that every body was impressed, for nobody was sure of his safety.

On Friday the good Protestants met in St. George's Fields, at the summons of Lord George Gordon, and marching to Westminster, insulted the Lords and Commons, who all bore it with great tameness. At night the outrages began by the demolition of the mals-house by Lincoln's Inn.

An exact journal of a week's defiance of government I cannot give you. On Monday, Mr. Strahan, who had been insulted, spoke to Lord Mansfield, who had I think been insulted too, of the licentiousness of the populace; and his Lordship treated it as a very slight irregularity. On Tuesday night they pulled down Fielding's house, and burnt his goods in the street. They had gutted on Monday Sir George Savile's house, but the building was saved. On Tuesday evening, leaving Fielding's ruins, they went to Newgate to demand their companions who had been seized demolishing the chapel. The keeper could not release them but by the Mayor's permission, which he went to ask; at his return he found all the prisoners released, and Newgate in a blaze. They then went to Bloomsbury and fastened upon Lord Mansfield's house, which they pulled down; and

and as for his goods, they totally burnt them. They have since gone to Cane-wood, but a guard was there before them. They plundered some Papists, I think, and burnt a mafs-house in Moor-fields the fame night.

On Wednesday I walked with Dr. Scot to look at Newgate, and found it in ruins, with the fire yet glowing. As I went by, the Protestants were plundering the Sessions-house at the Old Bailey. There were not, I believe, a hundred; but they did their work at leifure, in full security, without fentinels, without trepidation, as men lawfully employed, in full day. Such is the cowardice of a commercial place. On Wednesday they broke open the Fleet, and the King's-bench, and the Marshalsea, and Woodstreet-counter, and Clerk-enwell Bridewell, and released all the prifoners.

• At night they fet fire to the Fleet, and to the King's-bench, and I know not how many other places; and one might fee the glare of conflagration fill the fky from many parts. The fight was dreadful. Some people were threatened; Mr. Strahan advised me to take care of myfelf. Such a time of terror you have been happy in not feeing.

The King faid in council, that the magiftrates had not done their duty, but that he would do his own; and a proclamation was publifhed, directing us to keep our fervants within doors, as the peace was now to be preferved by force. The foldiers were fent out to different parts, and the town is now at quiet.

What has happened at your houfe you will know, the harm is only a few butts of beer; and I think you may be fure that the danger is over. There is a body of foldiers at St. Margaret's Hill.

Of Mr. Tylor I know nothing, nor can guess to what he can allude; but I know that a young fellow of little more than seventy, is naturally an unresisted conqueror of hearts.

Pray tell Mr. Thrale that I live here and have no fruit, and if he does not interpose, am not likely to have much; but I think he might as well give me a little, as give all to the gardener.

Pray make my compliments to Queeney and Burney.

I am, &c.

LETTER CCXLI.

Mrs. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

Bath, 3 o'Clock on Saturday morning,
June 10, 1780.

OH, my Dear Sir! was I ever particular in dating a letter before? and is this a time to begin to be particular when I have been up all night in trembling agitation, and only write now to drive time forward till the post comes in?—God preserve the future fortunes of my dear girls, I am expecting their doom every instant: now am I glad the Welch estate is not settled—one must find something

something to be glad of; and these barbarous beings cannot burn up fields of grass nor forests of timber. Miss Burney is frightened, but she says better times will come; she made me date my letter so, and persists in hoping that ten years hence we shall all three read it over together and be merry. Oh, no, no, no! here is poor prospect of merriment; the flames of the Romish chapel are not yet extinguished, and the rioters are going to Bristol to burn that. Their shouts are still in my ears; and I do not believe a dog or cat in the town sleeps this night. Mr. Thrall seems thunderstricken, he don't mind any thing; and Queeney's curiosity is stronger than her fears. But perhaps you will ask, *who is consternated?* as you did about the French invasion: surely there is nothing pedantick in expressing fear now however, nor nothing very romantick in feeling it, when, for aught I can tell, our property will be destroyed to-night, and our persons pursued to-morrow. The mob had always an idea of my husband's being a concealed Papist, and they used to say that we kept a priest in the house.

I remember at one election, a fellow reproaching another for being Mr. Thrall's friend; and calling out to him, *what, you are to be made a cardinal, on't you, for serving Popish Harry?* and this new business of the Quebec bill has given them fresh alarm.

Trifles, light as air, are to the jealous
Consummation strong, as proofs of holy writ,

says Shakespear; and when much wiser men than an election-mob is likely to consist of, once take up an hypothesis, they are sure to make all common sense and plain experience bend to it. Like
the

the iron bed of the tyrant Procrustes, who stretched those who were too short, and lopped those that were too long, till he made them fit.

Oh, would to heaven these letters would but come! some hope I have in Perkins's ability and diligence, some in our dear Sir Philip's ever friendly care. God preserve *their* lives for families which adore them. May they *but* save my children's fortunes from a destruction so little expected.

The mad fools here hooted a poor inoffensive man till he scampered over the wall, and said they were sure he must be the Pope, because he lodged on St. James's Parade, and had a night-gown with gold flowers in it.

Such ideots! but I have a better story than that. When the soldiers were sent for three hours ago, a shopkeeper's wife very wisely said to me, Why now, Ma'am, I begins to find what fools we were when we made such a piece of work one election year, and said that no soldiers should come in the town, 'cause we were *free Britons*. Why, Lord have mercy, it was a great deal a *better maxim* to sleep safe in our beds, than be *free Britons* and burned to death.

So Toryism and martial law, and standing armies for ever; and when the Papists are all burned, and the Protestants all hanged for burning them, the Jews may jump for joy. I think no one else can be pleased.

Here come the letters; safe, safe, safe. Sir Philip, kind creature, has been more than charming; he has saved us all by his friendly activity—God bless him—Do go to his house, and thank him; pray do, and tell him how I love him—he loves *you*: and a visit from Doctor Johnson will be worth forty letters from me, though I shall write instantly.

Perkins

Perkins has behaved like an emperor, and 'tis my earnest wish and desire, command if you please to call it so, that you will go over to the brew-house and express *your* sense of his good behaviour.

All is over so far, blessed be God: but Mr. Thrale is scarcely in security here, for the rioters have strange ideas about his *Papism* some how—We will move off therefore, and finish our Summer at Brighthelmstone, where I trust there is peace and quietness; and if not, why the sea and the packet are at hand. Mean time, let us pray to be delivered alike from the dangers of despotism and anarchy. The miniature I have seen gives me a perfect idea of what you in London have been witness to—but here will be no camps they say, and in town we have been told all people are putting immediately under martial law.

So farewell, and direct to Suffex after to-morrow; and let us hope these horrors are nearly at an end. Was not there an insurrection once in Henry VIIIth's time something like this? when foreigners, of whatever religion or country they might be, became victims to the fury of a misgoverned multitude; many of which were hanged afterwards for burning the property of *aliens*, as they were then phrased? I think the story is in one of our old folios at Streatham, and that the rioters proceeded exactly like those of the present day. 'Tis one of those fevers perhaps which some constitutions are subject to, and in a couple more centuries we shall have such another shock to recover from. Mean time I shall not go to bed, because my mind is too much agitated; but as soon as this letter is folded up, the cold bath shall steady my nerves a little for packing my trunks, and carrying the family across these country roads
where

where least confusion may be expected, and we will get to the seaside at Portsmouth, and so coast away to our old quarters.

The worst is, it will, before your letters reach me, be a full fortnight at least ; but never mind, every soul one meets will be able to give general accounts, and for particulars we may wait—or make more haste, if to wait should prove too difficult. I am at all times and places,

DEAR SIR,

Your most faithful servant,

L. H. THRALE.

I wrote you a long letter this morning, or more properly yester morning, and said we were going to Bristol, but you must not mind that.

LETTER

L E T T E R C C X L I I .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

DEAR MADAM,

June 10, 1780.

YOU have ere now heard and read enough to convince you, that we have had something to suffer, and something to fear, and therefore I think it necessary to quiet the sollicitude which you undoubtedly feel, by telling you that our calamities and terrors are now at an end. The soldiers are stationed so as to be every where within call; there is no longer any body of rioters, and the individuals are hunted to their holes, and led to prison; the streets are safe and quiet; Lord George was last night sent to the Tower. Mr. John Wilkes was this day with a party of soldiers in my neighbourhood, to seize the publisher of a seditious paper. Every body walks, and eats, and sleeps in security. But the history of the last week would fill you with amazement, it is without any modern example.

Several chapels have been destroyed, and several inoffensive Papists have been plundered, but the high sport was to burn the jails. This was a good rabble trick. The debtors and the criminals were all set at liberty; but of the criminals, as has always happened, many are already retaken, and two pirates have surrendered themselves, and it is expected that they will be pardoned.

Government now acts again with its proper force; and we are all again under the protection of the King and the law. I thought that it would
be

be agreeable to you and my master to have my testimony to the publick security; and that you would sleep more quietly when I told you that you are safe.

I am, dearest Lady,

Your, &c.



L E T T E R C C X L I I I .

To M r s . T H R A L E .

DEAR MADAM,

London, June 12, 1780.

ALL is well, and all is likely to continue well. The streets are all quiet, and the houses are all safe. This is a true answer to the first enquiry which obtrudes itself upon your tongue at the reception of a letter from London. The publick has escaped a very heavy calamity. The rioters attempted the Bank on Wednesday night, but in no great number; and like other thieves, with no great resolution. Jack Wilkes headed the party that drove them away. It is agreed, that if they had seized the Bank on Tuesday, at the height of the panick, when no resistance had been prepared, they might have carried irrecoverably away whatever they had found. Jack, who was always zealous for order and decency, declares, that if he be trusted with power,

power, he will not leave a rioter alive. There is however now no longer any need of heroism or bloodshed ; no blue riband is any longer worn.

—— called on Friday at Mrs. Gardiner's, to see how she escaped or what she suffered ; and told her, that she had herself too much affliction within doors, to take much notice of the disturbances without.

It was surely very happy that you and Mr. Thrale were away in the tumult ; you could have done nothing better than has been done, and must have felt much terrour which your absence has spared you.

We have accounts here of great violences committed by the Protestants at Bath ; and of the demolition of the malshouse. We have seen so much here, that we are very credulous.

Pray tell Miss Burney that Mr. Hutton called on me yesterday, and spoke of her with praise ; not profuse, but very sincere, just as I do. And tell Queeney, that if she does not write oftener, I will try to forget her. There are other pretty girls that perhaps I could get, if I were not constant.

My Lives go on but slowly. I hope to add some to them this week. I wish they were well done.

Thus far I had written when I received your letter of battle and conflagration. You certainly do right in retiring ; for who can guess the caprice of the rabble ? My master and Queeney are dear people for not being frightened, and you and Burney are dear people for being frightened. I wrote to you a letter of intelligence and consolation ; which, if you staid for it, you had on Saturday ; and I wrote another on Saturday, which perhaps may follow you from Bath, with some atchievement of John Wilkes.

Do not be disturbed; all danger here is apparently over; but a little agitation still continues. We frighten one another with seventy thousand Scots to come hither with the Dukes of Gordon and Argyle, and eat us, and hang us, or drown us; but we are all at quiet.

I am glad, though I hardly know why, that you are gone to Brighthelmstone rather than to Bristol. You are somewhat nearer home, and I may perhaps come to see you. Brighthelmstone will soon begin to be peopled, and Mr. Thrale loves the place; and you will see Mr. Scrase; and though I am sorry that you should be so outrageously unrooted, I think that Bath has had you long enough.

Of the commotions at Bath there has been talk here all day. An express must have been sent for the report arrived many hours before the post, at least before the distribution of the letters. This report I mentioned in the first part of my letter, while I was yet uncertain of the fact.

When it is known that the rioters are quelled in London, their spirit will sink in every other place, and little more mischief will be done.

I am, dear Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R CCXLIV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST MADAM, London, June 14, 1780.

EVERY thing here is safe and quiet. This is the first thing to be told; and this I told in my last letter directed to Brighthelmstone. There has indeed been an universal panick, from which the King was the first that recovered. Without the concurrence of his ministers, or the assistance of the civil magistrate, he put the soldiers in motion, and saved the town from calamities, such as a rabble's government must naturally produce.

Now you are at ease about the publick, I may tell you that I am not well; I have had a cold and cough some time, but it is grown so bad, that yesterday I fasted and was blooded, and to-day took physick and dined: but neither fasting, nor bleeding, nor dinner, nor physick, have yet made me well.

No sooner was the danger over, than the people of the Borough found out how foolish it was to be afraid, and formed themselves into four bodies for the defence of the place; through which they now march morning and evening in a martial manner.

I am glad to find that Mr. Thrale continues to grow better; if he is well, I hope we shall be all well: but I am very weary of my cough, though I have had much worse.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R

L E T T E R C C X L V .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

DEAR MADAM,

London, June 15, 1780.

LA S T night I told you that I was not well; and though you have much else to think on, perhaps you may be willing enough to hear, that by the help of an opiate, I think myself better to-day.

Whether I am or am not better, the town is quiet, and every body sleeps in quiet, except a few who please themselves with guarding us now the danger is over. Perkins seems to have managed with great dexterity. Every body, I believe, now sees, that if the tumult had been opposed immediately, it had been immediately suppressed; and we are therefore now better provided against an insurrection, than if none had happened.

I hope you, and Master, and Queeney, and Burney, are all well. I was contented last night to send an excuse to Vesey, and two days ago another to Mrs. Horneck; you may think I was bad, if you thought about it; and why should you not think about me who am so often thinking about you, and your appurtenances? But there is no gratitude in this world.

But I could tell you, Doris, if I would;
And since you treat me so, methinks I should.

So sings the sublime and pathetick Mr. Walfh. Well! and I will tell you too. Among the heroes of the Borough, who twice a-day perambulate,

bulate, or peregrinate High-street and the Clink, rides that renowned and redoubted knight, Sir Richard Hotham. There is magnanimity, which defies every danger that is past, and publick spirit, that stands sentinel over property that he does not own. Tell me no more of the self-devoted Decii, or of the leap of Curtius. Let Fame talk henceforward with all her tongues of Hotham the Hatmaker.

I was last week at Renny's conversation; and Renny got her room pretty well filled; and there were Mrs. Ord, and Mrs. Horneck, and Mrs. Bunbury, and other illustrious names, and much would poor Renny have given to have had Mrs. Thrale too, and Queensy and Burney: but human happiness is never perfect; there is always *une vuide affreuse*, as Maintenon complained, there is some craving void left aking in the breast. Renny is going to Ramsgate; and thus the world drops away, and I am left in the sultry town, to see the sun in the crab, and perhaps in the lion, while you are paddling with the Nereida.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R C C X L V I .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

DEAR MADAM.

Wednesday, June 21, 1780.

NOW you come to a settled place I have some inclination to write to you ; for in writing after you there was no pleasure. All is quiet ; and that quietness is now more likely to continue than if it had never been disturbed. ———'s case, if it be not affected, is ridiculous ; but there is in the world much tenderness where there is no misfortune, and much courage where there is no danger.

My cold is grown better, but is not quite well, nor bad enough now to be complained of. I wish I had been with you to see the Isle of Wight ; but I shall perhaps go some time without you, and then we shall be even.

What you told me of Mr. Middleton frightened me ; but I am still of my old opinion, that a semivegetable diet will keep all well. I have dined on Monday and to-day only on peas.

I suppose the town grows empty, for I have no invitations ; and I begin to wish for something, I hardly know what : but I should like to move when every body is moving ; and yet I purpose to stay till the work is done, which I take little care to do. *Sic labitur ætas.*

The world is full of troubles. Mrs. ——— has just been with me to get a surgeon to her daughter ; the girl that Mrs. Cumins rejected, who has received a kick from a horse, that has
broken

broken five fore-teeth on the upper side. The world is likewise full of escapes; had the blow been a little harder it had killed her.

It was a twelvemonth last Sunday since the convulsions in my breast left me. I hope I was thankful when I recollected it: by removing that disorder, a great improvement was made in the enjoyment of life. I am now as well as men at my age can expect to be, and I yet think I shall be better.

I have had with me a brother of ———, a Spanish merchant, whom the war has driven from his residence at Valencia; he is gone to see his friends, and will find Scotland but a sorry place after twelve years residence in a happier climate.— He is a very agreeable man, and speaks no Scotch.

Keep master to his diet, and tell him that his ill-willers are very unwilling to think that he can ever sit more in parliament, but by caution and resolution he may see many parliaments. Pay my respects to Queeney and Burney. Living so apart we shall get no credit by our studies; but I hope to see you all again some time. Do not let separation make us forget one another.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R C C X L V I I .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

DEAR MADAM,

London, July 4, 1780.

YOU are too happy for any body but yourself to travel in such pretty company, and leave every thing safe behind you, and find every thing well when you arrive; and yet I question if you are quite contented, though every body envies you. Keep my master tight in his geers, for if he breaks loose the mischief will be very extensive.

Your account of Mr. S—— and of Miss O—— is very melancholy; I wish them both their proper relief from their several maladies. But I am glad that Queeney continues well; and hope she will not be too rigorous with the young ones, but allow them to be happy their own way; for what better way will they ever find?

C'est que l'enfant toujours est homme;
C'est que l'homme est toujours enfant.

I have not seen or done much since I had the misfortune of seeing you go away. I was one night at Burney's. There were Pepys, and there were Mrs. Ord, and Paradise, and Hoole, and Dr. Dunbar of Aberdeen, and I know not how many more. And Pepys and I had all the talk.

To-day called on me the Dean of Hereford, who says that the barley-harvest is likely to be very abundant. There is something for our consolation.

Don't forget that I am, dear Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R

LETTER CCXLVIII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

London, July 20, 1780.

IF Mr. Thrale eats but half his usual quantity, he can hardly eat too much. It were better however to have some rule, and some security. Last week I saw flesh but twice, and I think fish once, the rest was pease.

You are afraid, you say, lest I extenuate myself too fast, and are an enemy to violence: but did you never hear nor read, dear Madam, that every man has his *genius*, and that the great rule by which all excellence is attained, and all success procured, is, to follow *genius*; and have you not observed in all our conversations that my *genius* is always in extremes; that I am very noisy, or very silent; very gloomy, or very merry; very sour, or very kind? And would you have me cross my *genius*, when it leads me sometimes to voracity and sometimes to abstinence? You know that the oracle said follow your *genius*. When we get together again, (but when alas will that be?) you can manage me, and spare me the solicitude of managing myself.

Poor Miss O—— called on me on Saturday, with that fond and tender application which is natural to misery, when it looks to every body for that help which nobody can give. I was melted; and soothed and counselled her as well as I could, and am to visit her to-morrow.

She

She gave a very honourable account of my dear Queeney; and says of my master, that she thinks his manner and temper more altered than his looks, but of this alteration she could give no particular account; and all that she could say ended in this, that he is now sleepy in the morning. I do not wonder at the scantiness of her narration, she is too busy within to turn her eyes abroad.

I am glad that Pepys is come, but hope that resolute temperance will make him unnecessary. I doubt he can do no good to poor Mr. Scrase.

I stay at home to work, and yet do not work diligently; nor can tell when I shall have done, nor perhaps does any body but myself wish me to have done; for what can they hope I shall do better? yet I wish the work was over, and I was at liberty. And what would I do if I was at liberty? Would I go to Mrs. Aston and Mrs. Porter, and see the old places, and sigh to find that my old friends are gone? Would I recal plans of life which I never brought into practice, and hopes of excellence which I once presumed, and never have attained? Would I compare what I now am with what I once expected to have been? Is it reasonable to wish for suggestions of shame, and opportunities of sorrow?

If you please, Madam, we will have an end of this, and contrive some other wishes. I wish I had you in an evening, and I wish I had you in a morning; and I wish I could have a little talk, and see a little frolick. For all this I must stay, but life will not stay.

I will end my letter and go to Blackmore's life, when I have told you that

I am, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R C C X L I X .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

DEAR MADAM,

London, July 27, 1780.

AND thus it is, Madam, that you serve me. After having kept me a whole week hoping and hoping, and wondering and wondering, what could have stopped your hand from writing, comes a letter to tell me, that I suffer by my own fault. As if I might not correspond with my Queeney, and we might not tell one another our minds about politicks or morals, or any thing else. Queeney and I are both steady, and may be trusted; we are none of the giddy gabblers, we think before we speak.

I am afraid that I shall hardly find my way this summer into the country, though the number of my Lives now grows less. I will send you two little volumes in a few days.

As the workmen are still at Streatham, there is no likelihood of seeing you and my master in any short time; but let my master be where he will so he be well. I am not, I believe, any fatter than when you saw me, and hope to keep corpulence away; for I am so lightsome and so airy, and can so walk, you would talk of it if you were to see me. I do not always sleep well; but I have no pain nor sickness in the night. Perhaps I only sleep ill because I am too long a-bed.

I dined yesterday at Sir Joshua's with Mrs. Cholmondely, and she told me, I was the best critick in the world; and I told her, that nobody in the world could judge like her of the merit of a critick.

On

On Sunday I was with Dr. Lawrence and his two sisters-in-law, to dine with Mr. G — at Putney. The Doctor cannot hear in a coach better than in a room, and it was but a dull day; only I saw two crownbirds, paltry creatures, and a red curlew.

Every body is gone out of town, only I am left behind, and know not when I shall see either Naiad or Dryad; however, it is as it has commonly been, I have no complaint to make but of myself. I have been idle, and *of idleness can come no goodness.*

Mrs. Williams was frighted from London as you were frighted from Bath. She is come back, as she thinks, better. Mrs. Desmoulins has a disorder resembling an asthma; which I am for curing with calomel and jalap, but Mr. Levet treats it with antimonial wine. Mr. Levet keeps on his legs stout, and walks, I suppose, ten miles a-day.

I stick pretty well to diet, and desire my master may be told of it; for no man said oftener than he, that *the less we eat the better.*

Poor —, after having thrown away Lord —'s patronage and three hundred a year, has had another disappointment. He procured a recommendation from Lord — to the Governor of Jamaica; but to make this useful, something was to be done by the Bishop of London, which has been refused. Thus is the world filled with hope and fear, and struggle, and disappointment.

Pray do you never add to the other vexations, any diminution of your kindness, for, Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R C C L .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

MADAM,

London, August 1, 1780.

I HAD your letter about Mr. S — and Miss O —; but there was nothing to which I had any answer, or to which any answer could be made.

This afternoon Dr. Lawrence drank tea, and, as he always does, asked about Mr. Thrale; I told him how well he was when I heard; and he does not eat too much, said the Doctor; I said, not often; and the return was, that he who in that case should once eat too much, might eat no more. I keep my rule very well; and, I think, continue to grow better.

Tell my pretty dear Queeney, that when we meet again, we will have, at least for some time, two lessons in a day. I love her, and think on her when I am alone; hope we shall be very happy together, and mind our books.

Now August and Autumn are begun, and the Virgin takes possession of the sky. Will the Virgin do any thing for a man of seventy? I have a great mind to end my work under the Virgin.

I have sent two volumes to Mr. Perkins to be sent to you, and beg you to send them back as soon as you have all done with them. I let the first volume get to the Reynolds's, and could never get it again.

I sent to Lord Westcote about his brother's life, but he says he knows not whom to employ; and
is

is sure I shall do him no injury. There is an ingenious scheme to save a day's work, or part of a day, utterly defeated. Then what avails it to be wise? The plain and the artful man must both do their own work.—But I think I have got a life of Dr. Young.

Sufy and Sophy have had a fine Summer; it is a comfort to think that somebody is happy. And they make verses, and act plays.

Mrs. Montague is, I think, in town, and has sent Mrs. Williams her annuity; but I hear nothing from her, but I may be contented if I hear from you, for

I am, &c.



LETTER CCLI.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

August 8, 1780.

WHAT do you scold so for about Granville's life; do you not see that the appendage neither gains nor saves any thing to me? I shall have Young's life given me, to spite you.

Methinks it was pity to send the girls to school; they have indeed had a fine vacation, dear loves, but if it had been longer it had been still finer.

Did Master read my books? You say nothing of him in this letter; but I hope he is well, and growing

growing every day nearer to perfect health. When do you think of coming home?

I have not yet persuaded myself to work, and therefore know not when my work will be done. Yet I have a mind to see Lichfield. Dr. Taylor seems to be well. He has written to me without a syllable of his lawsuit.

You have heard in the papers how * * * is come to age; I have enclosed a short song of congratulation, which you must not show to any body. It is odd that it should come into any body's head. I hope you will read it with candour; it is, I believe, one of the author's first essays in that way of writing, and a beginner is always to be treated with tenderness.

My two gentlewomen are both complaining. Mrs. Desmoulins had a mind of Dr. Turton; I sent for him, and he has prescribed for Mrs. Williams, but I do not find that he promises himself much credit from either of them.

I hope it will not be long before I shall have another little volume for you, and still there will be work undone. If it were not for these Lives, I think I could not forbear coming to look at you, now you have room for me. But I still think to stay till I have cleared my hands.

Queeney is not good. She seldom writes to me, and yet I love her, and I love you all, for

I am, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R CCLII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

..... August 14. 1780.

I HOPE my dear Queeney's suspicions are groundless. Whenever any alteration of manner happens, I believe a small cathartick will set all right.

I hope you have no design of stealing away to Italy before the election, nor of leaving me behind you; though I am not only Seventy, but Seventy-one. Could not you let me lose a year in round numbers? Sweetly, sweetly, sings Dr. Swift,

Some dire misfortune to portend
No enemy can match a friend.

But what if I am Seventy-two? I remember Sulpitius says of Saint Martin (now that's above your reading) *Est animus victor annorum, et senectutis cedere nescius.* Match me that among your young folks. If you try to plague me, I shall tell you that, according to Galen, life begins to decline from *Thirty-five.*

But as we go off, others come on: Queeney's last letter was very pretty. What a hussey she is to write so seldom. She has no events, then let her write sentiment as you and I do; and sentiment you know is inexhaustible.

If you want events, here is Mr. Levet just come in at fourscore from a walk to Hampstead, eight miles, in August. This; however, is all that I
have

have to tell you, except that I have three bunches of grapes on a vine in my garden ; at least, this is all that I will now tell of my garden.

Both my females are ill, both very ill ; Mrs. Desmoulins thought that she wished for Dr. Turton ; and I sent for him, and then took him to Mrs. Williams, and he prescribes for both, though without much hope of benefiting either. Yet physick has its powers : you see that I am better ; and Mr. Shaw will maintain, that he and I saved my master. But if he is to live always away from us, what did we get by saving him ? If we cannot live together, let us hear ; when I have no letter from Brighthelmston, think how I fret, and write oftener ; you write to this body and to that, and nobody loves you like

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCLIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

August 18, 1780.

I LOST no time, and have enclosed our conversation. You write of late very seldom. I wish you would write upon *subjects* ; any thing to keep alive. You have your beaux, and your flatterers, and here am poor I forced to flatter myself ; and any good of myself I am not very easy to believe, so

so that I really live but a sorry life. What shall I do with Lyttleton's life? I can make a short life, and a short criticism, and conclude. Why did not you like Collins, and Gay, and Blackmore, as well as Akenfide?

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R C C L I V .

Mrs. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

August 20.

I WILL try, my dear Sir, to make you some amends, by writing at least one very long letter; but indeed I can *think* only of one thing, whatever I may *say*.

Do you recollect our laughing fifteen years ago at a gawkee girl of seventeen? who, when her toast was called for at a city table crowded with coarse men—they were drinking sentiments—Is not, says she, this a pretty health—*What we think on most, and talk on least*. I am come pretty much to her case: for it is not right to speak of that which never fails to keep pressing upon my spirits, and preying upon my mind. Without frequent bleedings, there is however danger on one side, and
by

by bleeding frequently, we induce as certain a danger on the other.—We had a visit yesterday from Mr. R——; whom perhaps you remember, perhaps not: but our morning conversation with him will not be easily forgotten by me, I thought it would drive me wild upon the spot. In such a case, can there be any fears of my *stealing away to Italy* without you? when I should not think you, nor twenty more such friends if I could find them, sufficient to guard us from the hazard of wild exploits. Whoever is sick, is surely safest at home; and have we not mortifications enough already, without going where one might be amused, in order to be miserable? Oh no, let us be miserable in the old places, and not pollute scenes of pleasure with objects of sorrow.

Well! as you say, Queeney is beginning life, and so far very happily, as it is begun under your tuition: she appears to me proud of your partiality; and, I dare say, will try long to deserve it. You are getting quite well as it appears; and when we meet, we shall see *victor annorum*. The Lives will be a standing proof of your powers after the grand climacterick; and you make gay impromptus upon the boys, instead of sitting down like common mortals at seventy, and letting the boys make gay impromptus upon you.

Blackmore's life is admirable; who says I don't like it? I like all the Whig lives prodigiously: Akenfide's best of the little one's, for the sake of a pretty disquisition upon ridicule that pleased me particularly, and that elegant stricture on the Pleasures of Imagination; which will probably be much read and admired by every one. It is my sincere opinion that Milton, and Blackmore, and Thomson, would have been all contented with what you have said of *them*, though the admirers of Lycidas will be angry no doubt.

The

concerning the pleasures I enjoy, and the flattery I receive, all which has nothing to do with comfort for the present distress, and sometimes I am angry when I read such stuff. That your two Sultanas are sick is very uncomfortable for you; may be Dr. Turton may do them good: I never saw Dr. Turton, but my heart, like Clarissa's, naturally leans towards a physician. *Le medicin et le curè*, as the French themselves, who have gayer hearts than mine, confess, are the last earthly objects on which the human hopes and human eyes are to be fixed: and it is somewhat unfair not to let them take up a little of our affections beforehand.

If we do go to Michelgrove, Hester will write all one; she is very attentive to her father, very dutiful, and very wise. I hope my anxiety is concealed from her pretty well, it would be exceeding wrong to depress her spirits, and very dangerous to her health.

I am most sincerely, dear Sir,

Your faithful servant,

H. L. THRALE.

The conversation you inclosed I could have written myself; as Juliet says, Yea, but all this did I know before.

L E T T E R C C L V .

T o M r s . T H R A L E .

D E A R M A D A M .

L o n d o n , A u g u s t 2 4 , 1 7 8 9 .

I DO not wonder that you can think and write but of one thing. Yet concerning that thing you may be less uneasy, as you are now in the right way. You are at least doing, what I was always desirous to have you do, and which, when despair put an end to the caution of men going in the dark, produced at last all the good that has been obtained. Gentle purges, and slight phlebotomies, are not my favourites; they are pop-gun batteries, which lose time and effect nothing. It was by bleeding till he fainted, that his life was saved. I would, however, now have him trust chiefly to vigorous and stimulating cathartics. To bleed, is only proper when there is no time for slower remedies.

Does he sleep in the night? if he sleeps, there is not much danger; any thing like wakefulness in a man either by nature or habit so uncommonly sleepy, would put me in great fear. Do not now hinder him from sleeping whenever heaviness comes upon him. Quiet rest, light food, and strong purges, will, I think, set all right. Be you vigilant, but be not frightened.

Of Mr. R—— I very well remember all but the name. “He had a nice discernment of loss and gain.” This I thought a power not hard to be attained. What kept him out then must keep him out now; the want of a place for him. Mr. P—— then observed, that there was nothing upon

upon which he could be employed. Matters will never be carried to extremities. Mr. P—— cannot be discharged, and he will never suffer a superiour. That voluntary submission to a new mind is not an heroick quality; but it has always been among us, and therefore I mind it less.

The expedition to foreign parts you will not much encourage, and you need not, I think, make any great effort to oppose it; for it is as likely to put us out of the way to mischief, as to bring us into it. We can have no projects in Italy. Exercise may relieve the body, and variety will amuse the mind. The expence will not be greater than at home in the regular course of life. And we shall be safe from B—— and G——, and all instigators to schemes of waste. *Si te fata ferant, fer fata.*

The chief wish that I form is, that Mr. Thrale could be made to understand his true state: to know that he is tottering upon a point; to consider every change of his mental character as the symptom of a disease; to distrust any opinions or purposes that shoot up in his thoughts; to think that violent mirth is the foam, and deep sadness the subsidence of a morbid fermentation; to watch himself, and counteract by experienced remedies every new tendency, or uncommon sensation. This is a new and ungrateful employment; but without this self-examination he never can be safe. You must try to teach it, and he to learn it gradually, and in this my sweet Queeney must help you; I am glad to hear of her vigilance and observation. She is my pupil.

I suppose the S—— scheme is now past; I saw no great harm in it, though perhaps no good. Do not suffer little things to embarrass you. Our great work is constant temperance, and frequent, very frequent evacuation; and that they may not

be interrupted, conviction of their necessity is to be prudently inculcated.

I am not at present so much distressed as you, because I think your present method likely to be efficacious. Dejection may indeed follow, and I should dread it from too copious bleeding; for as purges are more under command, and more concurrent with the agency of nature, they seldom effect any irremediable change. However, we must expect after such a disease, that the mind will fluctuate long before it finds its center.

I will not tell you, nor Master, nor Queeney, how I long to be among you; but I would be glad to know when we are to meet, and hope our meeting will be cheerful.

I am, dearest Lady,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCLVI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

London, August 25, 1780.

YESTERDAY I could write but about one thing. I am sorry to find from my dear Queeney's letter to-day, that Mr. Thrale's sleep was too much shortened. He begins however now, she says, to recover it. Sound sleep will be the surest token of returning health. The swelling of his legs has
nothing

nothing in it dangerous ; it is the natural consequence of lax muscles, and when the laxity is known to be artificial, need not give any uneasiness. I told you so formerly. Every thing that I have told you about my dear master has been true. Let him take purgatives, and let him sleep. Bleeding seems to have been necessary now ; but it was become necessary only by the omission of purges. Bleeding is only for exigencies.

I wish you or Queeney would write to me every post while the danger lasts. I will come if I can do any good, or prevent any evil.

For any other purpose, I suppose, now poor Sam may be spared ; you are regaled with Greek and Latin, and you are *Thralia Castalia semper amata choro* ; and you have a daughter equal to yourself. I shall have enough to do with one and the other. Your admirer has more Greek than poetry ; he was however worth the conquest, though you had conquered me. Whether you can hold him as fast, there may be *some dram of a scruple*, for he thinks you have full tongue enough, as appears by some of his verses ; he will leave you for somebody that will let him take his turn, and then I may come in again : for, I tell you, nobody loves you so well, and therefore never think of changing like the moon, and *being constant only in your inconstancy*.

I have not dined out for some time but with Renny or Sir Joshua ; and next week Sir Joshua goes to Devonshire, and Renny to Richmond, and I am left by myself. I wish I could say *namquam minus*, &c. but I am not diligent.

I am afraid that I shall not see Lichfield this year, yet it would please me to shew my friends how much better I am grown : but I am not grown, I am afraid, less idle ; and of idleness I am now paying the fine by having no leisure.

Does

Does the expedition to Sir John Shelly's go on? The first week of September is now at no great distance; nor the eighteenth day, which concludes another of my wretched years. It is time to have done.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R C C L V I I .

. T o M r s . T H R A L E .

DEAREST MADAM,

London, April 5, 1781.

OF your injunctions, to pray for you and write to you, I hope to leave neither unobserved; and I hope to find you willing in a short time to alleviate your trouble by some other exercise of the mind. I am not without my part of the calamity. No death since that of my wife has ever oppressed me like this. But let us remember, that we are in the hands of Him who knows when to give and when to take away; who will look, upon us with mercy through all our variations of existence, and who invites us to call on him in the day of trouble. Call upon him in this great revolution of life, and call with confidence. You will then find comfort for the past, and support for the future. He that has given you happiness in marriage, to a degree of which, without personal knowledge, I should have thought the description fabulous, can give you another mode of happiness

happiness as a mother ; and at last, the happiness of losing all temporal cares in the thoughts of an eternity in heaven.

I do not exhort you to reason yourself into tranquillity. We must first pray, and then labour ; first implore the blessing of God, and those means which he puts in our hands. Cultivated ground has few weeds ; a mind occupied by lawful business, has little room for useless regret.

We read the will to-day ; but I will not fill my first letter with any other account than that, with all my zeal for your advantage, I am satisfied ; and that the other executors, more used to consider property than I, commended it for wisdom and equity. Yet why should I not tell you that you have five hundred pounds for your immediate expences, and two thousand pounds a-year, with both the houses and all the goods ?

Let us pray for one another, that the time, whether long or short, that shall yet be granted us, may be well spent ; and that when this life, which at the longest is very short, shall come to an end, a better may begin which shall never end.

I am, dearest Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R CCLVIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

April 7, 1781.

I HOPE you begin to find your mind grow clearer. My part of the loss hangs upon me. I have lost a friend of boundless kindness at an age when it is very unlikely that I should find another.

If you think change of place likely to relieve you, there is no reason why you should not go to Bath; the distances are unequal, but with regard to practice and business they are the same. It is a day's journey from either place; and the post is more expeditious and certain to Bath. Consult only your own inclination, for there is really no other principle of choice. God direct and bless you.

Mr. C—— has offered Mr. P—— money, but it was not wanted. I hope we shall all do all we can to make you less unhappy, and you must do all you can for yourself. What we, or what you can do, will for a time be but little; yet certainly that calamity which may be considered as doomed to fall inevitably on half mankind, is not finally without alleviation.

It is something for me, that as I have not the decrepitude I have not the callousness of old age. I hope in time to be less afflicted.

I am, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R CCLIX.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST MADAM, London, April 9, 1781.

THAT you are gradually recovering your tranquility, is the effect to be humbly expected from trust in God. Do not represent life as darker than it is. Your loss has been very great, but you retain more than almost any other can hope to possess. You are high in the opinion of mankind; you have children from whom much pleasure may be expected; and that you will find many friends, you have no reason to doubt. Of my friendship, be it worth more or less, I hope you think yourself certain, without much art or care. It will not be easy for me to repay the benefits that I have received; but I hope to be always ready at your call. Our sorrow has different effects; you are withdrawn into solitude, and I am driven into company. I am afraid of thinking of what I have lost. I never had such a friend before. Let me have your prayers and those of my dear Queeney.

The prudence and resolution of your design to return so soon to your business and your duty deserves great praise; I shall communicate it on Wednesday to the other executors. Be pleased to let me know whether you would have me come to Streatham to receive you, or stay here till the next day.

I am, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R CCLX.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

London, April 11, 1781.

I AM glad to hear from my dear Miss, that you have recovered tranquility enough to think on bathing; but there is no disposition in the world to leave you long to yourself. Mr. P—— pretends that your absence produces a thousand difficulties which I believe it does not produce. He frights Mr. C * * * *. Mr. C—— is of my mind, that there is no need of hurry. I would not have this importunity give you any alarm or disturbance; but, to pacify it, come as soon as you can prevail on your mind to mingle with business. I think business the best remedy for grief as soon as it can be admitted.

We met to day, and were told of mountainous difficulties, till I was provoked to tell them, that if there were really so much to do and suffer, there would be no executors in the world. Do not suffer yourself to be terrified.

I comfort you, and hope God will bless and support you; but I feel myself like a man beginning a new course of life. I had interwoven myself with my dear friend; but our great care ought to be, that we may be fit and ready, when in a short time we shall be called to follow him.

There is, however, no use in communicating to you my heaviness of heart. I thank dear Miss for her letter.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R

L E T T E R CCLXI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST MADAM, London, April 12, 1781.

YOU will not suppose that much has happened since last night, nor indeed is this a time for talking much of loss and gain. The business of Christians is now for a few days in their own bosoms. God grant us to do it properly. I hope you gain ground on your affliction. I hope to overcome mine. You and Miss must comfort one another. May you long live happily together. I have nobody with whom I expect to share my uneasiness, nor, if I could communicate it, would it be less. I give it little vent, and amuse it as I can. Let us pray for one another. And, when we meet, we may try what fidelity and tenderness will do for us.

There is no wisdom in useless and hopeless sorrow; but there is something in it so like virtue, that he who is wholly without it cannot be loved, nor will by me at least be thought worthy of esteem. My next letter will be to Queeney.

I am, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R CCLXII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

April 14, 1781.

MY intention was to have written this day to my dear Queeney; but I have just heard from you, and therefore this letter shall be your's. I am glad that you find the behaviour of your acquaintance such as you can commend. The world is not so unjust or unkind as it is peevishly represented. Those who deserve well seldom fail to receive from others such services as they can perform; but few have much in their power, or are so stationed as to have great leisure from their own affairs, and kindness must be commonly the exuberance of content. The wretched have no compassion, they can do good only from strong principles of duty.

I purpose to receive you at Streatham, but wonder that you come so soon.

I sent immediately to Mr. Perkins to send you twenty pounds, and intended to secure you from disappointment, by inclosing a note in this; but yours written on Wednesday 11th, came not till Saturday the 14th, and mine written to-night, will not come before you leave Brighthelmston, unless you have put Monday next for Monday sevensnight, which I suspect, as you mention no alteration of your mind.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R CCLXIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

April 17, 1781.

MR. Norris (Mr. Robson's partner) promised to send the will to-morrow ; you will therefore have it before you have this letter. When you have talked with Mr. Scrase, write diligently down all that you can remember, and, where you have any difficulties, ask him again, and rather stay where you are a few days longer than come away with imperfect information.

The executors will hardly meet till you come, for we have nothing to do till we go all together to prove the will.

I have not had a second visit from Mr. ———, for he found his discourse to me very unavailing. I was dry ; but if he goes to ——— he will be overpowered with words as good as his own. ——— appears a very modest inoffensive man, not likely to give any trouble. The difficulty of finding executors Mr. Scrase has formerly told you, and among all your acquaintance, except P——, whom you pressed into the service, and who would perhaps have deserted it, I do not see with whom you could have been more commodiously connected. They all mean well, and will, I think, all concur.

Miss told me that you intended to bathe ; it is right : all external things are diversions : let her bathe too. I regain that tranquillity which irremediable misfortunes necessarily admit, and do not, I hope, think on what I have lost, without grateful recollection of what I have enjoyed.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R

L E T T E R CCLXIV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

London, April 16, 1781.

AS I was preparing this day to go to Streatham, according to the direction of your letter of the 11th, which I could not know, though I suspected it, to be erroneous, I received two letters, of which the first effect was, that it saved me a fruitless journey. Of these letters, that which I perceive to have been written first has no date of time or place; the second was written on the 14th, but they came together.

I forbore, because I would not disturb you, to tell you, that last week Mr. — came to talk about partnership, and was very copious. I dismissed him with nothing harsher than, *that I was not convinced.*

You will have much talk to hear. Mr. C—— speaks with great exuberance, but what he says, when at last he says it, is commonly right. Mr. — made an oration flaming with the terrifick, which I discovered to have no meaning at all; for the result was, that if we stopped payment we should lose credit.

I have written to Mr. Robson to send the will. There were two copies, but I know not who has them.

You are to receive five hundred pounds immediately. Mr. Scrase shall certainly see the will, if you and I go to Brighthelmston on purpose, which, if we have any difficulty, may be our best expedient.

I am

I am encouraged, dearest Lady, by your spirit. The season for *agues* is now over. You are in your civil character a man. You may sue and be sued. If you apply to business perhaps half the mind which you have exercised upon knowledge and elegance, you will need little help, what help however I can give you, will, I hope, be always at call.

(Make my compliments to Mr. Scrase.)

I am, &c.



L E T T E R CCLXV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Oxford, Oct. 17, 1781.

ON Monday evening arrived at the Angel Inn at Oxford, Mr. Johnson and Mr. Barber, without any sinister accident.

I am here; but why am I here? On my way to Lichfield, where I believe Mrs. Aston will be glad to see me. We have known each other long, and, by consequence, are both old; and she is paralytick; and if I do not see her soon, I may see her no more in this world. To make a visit on such considerations is to go on a melancholy errand. But such is the course of life.

This place is very empty, but there are more here whom I know, than I could have expected.

Young

Young Burke has just been with me, and I have dined to day with Dr. Adams, who seems fond of me. But I have not been very well. I hope I am not ill by sympathy, and that you are making haste to recover your plumpness and your complexion. I left you *skinny and lean*.

To-morrow, if I can, I shall go forward, and when I see Lichfield I shall write again.

Mr. Parker, the bookseller, sends his respects to you : I send mine to the young ladies.

I am, &c.



L E T T E R C C L X V I .

To M r s . T H R A L E .

DEAR MADAM,

Lichfield, Oct. 20, 1781.

I WROTE from Oxford, where I staid two days ; on Thursday I went to Birmingham, and was told by Hector that I should not be well so soon as I expected ; but that well I should be. Mrs. Careless took me under her care, and told me when I had tea enough. On Friday I came hither, and have escaped the post-chaises all the way. Every body here is as kind as I expected, I think Lucy is kinder than ever. I am very well. Now we are both valetudinary, we shall have something to write about. We can tell each other our complaints, and give reciprocal comfort and advice, as—not to eat too much—and—not to drink too little,

little, and we may now and then add a few strictures of reproof: and so we may write and write till we can find another subject. Pray make my compliments to all the ladies, great and little.

I am, &c.



L E T T E R CCLXVII.

To MRS. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Lichfield, Oct. 23, 1781.

I HAD both your letters, and very little good news in either of them. The diminution of the estate, though unpleasing and unexpected, must be borne, because it cannot be helped; but I do not apprehend why the other part of your income should fall short. I understood that you were to have 1,500l. yearly from the money arising from the sale, and that your claim was first.

I sincerely applaud your resolution not to run out, and wish you always to save something, for that which is saved may be spent at will, and the advantages are very many of saving some money loose and unappropriated. If your ammunition is always ready, you may shoot advantage as it starts, or pleasure as it flies. Resolve therefore never to want money.

The Gravedo is not removed, nor does it increase. My nights have commonly been bad. Mrs. Aston is much as I left her, without any new

symptoms; but, between time and palsy, wearing away. Mrs. Gastrel is brisk and lively.

Burney told me that she was to go, but you will have my dear Queeney; tell her that I do not forget her, and that I hope she remembers me. Against our meeting we will both make good resolutions, which on my side, I hope to keep; but such hopes are very deceitful. I would not willingly think the same of all hopes, and particularly should be loath to suspect of deceit, my hope of being always,

Dearest Madam,

Your, &c.



LETTER CCLXVIII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAREST DEAR LADY,

Ox. 27, 1781.

YOUR Oxford letter followed me hither, with Lichfield put upon the direction in the place of Oxford, and was received at the same time as the letter written next after it. All is therefore well.

Queeney is a naughty captious girl, that will not write because I did not remember to ask her. Pray tell her that I ask her now, and that I depend upon her for the history of her own time.

Poor Lucy's illness has left her very deaf, and, I think, very inarticulate. I can scarcely make
I her

her understand me, and she can hardly make me understand her. So here are merry doings. But she seems to like me better than she did. She eats very little, but does not fall away.

Mrs. Cobb and Peter Garrick are as you left them. Garrick's legatees at this place are very angry that they receive nothing. Things are not quite right, though we are so far from London.

Mrs. Aston is just as I left her. She walks no worse; but I am afraid speaks less distinctly as to her utterance. Her mind is untouched. She eats too little, and wears away. The extenuation is her only bad symptom. She was glad to see me.

That naughty girl Queeney, now she is in my head again, how could she think that I did not wish to hear from her, a dear sweet?—But he must suffer who can love.

All here is gloomy; a faint struggle with the tediousness of time; a doleful confession of present misery, and the approach seen and felt of what is most dreaded and most shunned. But such is the lot of man.

I am, dearest Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCLXIX.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Lichfield, Oct. 31, 1781.

IT almost enrages me to be suspected of forgetting the discovery of the papers relating to Cummins's claim. These papers we must grant the liberty of using, because the law will not suffer us to deny them. We may be summoned to declare what we know, and what we know is in those papers. When the evidence appears, * * * will be directed by her lawyers to submit in quiet. I suppose it will be proper to give at first only a transcript.

Your income, diminished as it is, you may, without any painful frugality, make sufficient. I wish your health were as much in your power, and the effects of abstinence were as certain as those of parsimony. Of your regimen I do not think with much approbation; it is only palliative, and crops the disease, but does not eradicate it. I wish you had at the beginning digested full meals in a warm room, and excited the humour to exhaust its power upon the surface. This, I believe, must be done at last.

Miss Seward has been enquiring after Susan Thrale, of whom she had heard so much from Mrs. Cumyns, as excites her curiosity. If my little dear Perversity continues to be cross, Susy may be my girl too; but I had rather have them both. If Queeney does not write soon she shall have a very reprehensory letter.

I have

I have here but a dull scene. Poor Lucy's health is very much broken. She takes very little of either food or exercise, and her hearing is very dull, and her utterance confused; but she will have *Watts's Improvement of the Mind*. Her mental powers are not impaired, and her social virtues seem to increase. She never was so civil to me before.

Mrs. Aston is not, that I perceive, worse than when I left her; but she eats too little, and is somewhat emaciated. She likewise is glad to see me, and I am glad that I have come.

There is little of the sunshine of life, and my own health does not gladden me. But to scatter the gloom—I went last night to the ball, where, you know, I can be happy even without you. On the ball, which was very gay, I looked a-while, and went away.

I am, dear Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R C C L X X .

Mrs. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

DEAR SIR,

Nov. 2.

THERE was no need to be enraged, because I thought you might easily forget a transaction not at all pleasing to remember; and no need that I should be enraged if you had indeed forgotten it—but you were always suspicious in matters of memory. Cummins don't forget it however, as I can tell you more at large. My health is growing very bad to be sure. I will starve still more rigidly for a while, and watch myself carefully; but more than six months will I not bestow upon that subject; you shall not have in me a valetudinary correspondent, who is always writing such letters, that to read the labels tyed on bottles by an apothecary's boy would be more eligible and amusing; nor will I live like Flavia in Law's Serious Call, who spends half her time and money on herself, with sleeping draughts and waking draughts and cordials and broths. My desire is always to determine against my own gratification, so far as shall be possible for my body to co-operate with my mind, and you will not suspect me of wearing blisters, and living wholly upon vegetables for sport. If that will do, the disorder may be removed; but if health is gone, and gone for ever, we will act as Zachary Pearce the famous bishop of Rochester did, when he lost the wife he loved so—call for one glass to the health of her who is departed, never more to return—and so
go

go quietly back to the usual duties of life, and forbear to mention her again from that time till the last day of it. — Susan is exceedingly honoured, I think, by Miss Seward's enquiries, and I would have Susan think so too; the humbler one's heart is, the more one's pride is gratified, if one may use so apparently an Irish expression, but the meaning of it does not lie deep. They who are too proud to care whether they please or no, lose much delight themselves, and give none to their neighbours. Mrs. Porter is in a bad way, and that makes you melancholy; the visits to Stowhill will this year be more frequent than ever. I am glad Watts's *Improvement of the Mind* is a favourite book among the Lichfield ladies: it is so pious, so wise, so easy a book to read for any person, and so useful, nay necessary, are its precepts to us all, that I never cease recommending it to our young ones. 'Tis *a la portée de chacun* so, yet never vulgar; but Law beats him for wit; and the names are never happy in Watts some-how. I fancy there was no comparison between the scholastick learning of the two writers; but there is prodigious knowledge of the human heart, and perfect acquaintance with common life, in the *Serious Call*. You used to say you would not trust me with that author up-stairs on the dressing-room shelf, yet I now half wish I had never followed any precepts but his. Our ladies, indeed, might possibly object to the education given her daughters by Law's *Eusebia*.

That the ball did so little towards diverting you, I do not wonder: what can a ball do towards diverting any one who has not other hopes and other designs than barely to see people dance, or even to dance himself? They who are entertained at the ball are never much amused by the ball I believe, yet I love the dance on Queeney's birthday

day and yours, where none but very honest and very praiseworthy passions, if passions they can be called, heighten the mirth and gaiety. It has been thought by many wise folks, that we fritter our pleasures all away by refinement, and when one reads Goldsmith's works, either verse or prose, one fancies that in corrupt life there is more enjoyment—yet *we* should find little solace from ale-house merriment or cottage carousals, whatever *the best wrestler on the green* might do I suppose; mere brandy and brown sugar *liqueur*, like that which Foote presented the Cherokee kings with, and won their hearts from our fine ladies who treated them with Sponge biscuits and Frontiniac. I am glad Queeney and you are to resolve so stoutly, and labour so violently; such a union may make her wiser and you happier, and can give me nothing but delight.

We read a good deal here in your absence, that is, *I* do: it is better we fate all together than in separate rooms; better that I read than not; and better that I should never read what is not fit for the young ones to hear: besides, I am sure they *must* hear that which I read *out* to them, and so one saves the trouble of commanding what one knows will never be obeyed.—I can find no other way as well.

Come home, however, for 'tis dull living without you; Sir Philip and Mr. Selwin call very often, and are exceedingly kind. I see them always with gratitude and pleasure; but as the first has left us now for a month, come home therefore. You are not happy away, and I fear I shall never be happy again in this world between one thing and another. My health, flesh, and complexion are quite lost, and I shall have a red face if I live, and that will be mighty detestable—a humpback would be less offensive vastly.

This

This is the time for fading: the year is fading round us, and every day shuts in more dismally than the last did. I never passed so melancholy a summer, though I have passed some that were more painful; privation is indeed supposed to be worse than pain.

Instead of trying the Sortes Virgilianæ for our absent friends, we agreed after dinner to-day to ask little Harriet what they were doing now who used to be our common guests at Streatham. Dr. Johnson (says she) is very rich and wise, Sir Philip is drown'd in the water—and Mr. Piozzi is very sick and lame, poor man! What a curious way of deciding! all in her little soft voice. Was not there a custom among the ancients in some country——'tis mentioned in Herodotus, if I remember right——that they took that method of enquiring into futurity from the mouths of infants under three years old?—but I will not swear to the book I have read it in. The Scriptural expression, however, *Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings*, &c. is likely enough to allude to it, if it were once a general practice. In Ireland, where the peasants are mad after play, particularly backgammon, Mr. Murphy says, they will even, when deprived of the necessaries for continuing so favourite a game, cut the turf in a clean spot of green sward, and make it into tables for that amusement, setting a little baby boy behind the hedge to call their throws for them, and supply with his unconscious decisions the place of box and dice.

Adieu, dear Sir, and be as cheerful as you can this gloomy season. I see nobody happy hereabouts but the Burneys; they love each other with uncommon warmth of family affection, and are beloved by the world as much as if their fondness were less concentrated. The Captain has got
a fifty

a fifty gun ship now. and we are all *so* rejoiced. Once more farewell, and do not forget Streatham nor its inhabitants, who are all much yours—— and most so of all,

Your faithful servant,

H. L. THRALE.

We never name Mr. Newton of Lichfield: I hope neither he nor his fine China begin to break yet——of other friends there the accounts get very bad to be sure.



L E T T E R C C L X X I.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST MADAM, Lichfield, Nov. 3, 1781.

YOU very kindly remind me of the dear home which I have left; but I need none of your aids to recollection, for I am here gasping for breath, and yet better than those whom I came to visit. Mrs. Aston has been for three years a paralytic crawler; but I think, with her mind unimpaired. She seems to me such as I left her; but she now eats little, and is therefore much emaciated. Her sister thinks her, and she thinks herself; passing fast away.

Lucy

Lucy has had since my last visit a dreadful illness, from which her physicians declared themselves hopeless of recovering her, and which has shaken the general fabrick, and weakened the powers of life. She is unable or unwilling to move, and is never likely to have more of either strength or spirit.

I am so visibly disordered, that a medical man, who only saw me at church, sent me some pills. To those whom I love here I can give no help, and from those that love me none can I receive. Do you think that I need to be reminded of home and you?

The time of the year is not very favourable to excursions. I thought myself above assistance or obstruction from the seasons; but find the autumnal blast sharp and nipping, and the fading world an uncomfortable prospect. Yet I may say with Milton, that I do not *abate much of heart or hope*. To what I have done I do not despair of adding something, but *what it shall be I know not*.

I am, Madam,

most affectionately yours.

LETTER

L E T T E R CCLXXII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Ashbourne, Nov 10, 1781.

YESTERDAY I came to Ashbourne, and last night I had very little rest. Dr. Taylor lives on milk, and grows every day better, and is not wholly without hope. Every body enquires after you and Queeney; but whatever Burney may think of the celerity of fame, the name of Evelina had never been heard at Lichfield till I brought it. I am afraid my dear townsmen will be mentioned in future days as the last part of this nation that was civilized. But the days of darkness are soon to be at an end; the reading society ordered it to be procured this week.

Since I came into this quarter of the earth I have had a very sorry time, and I hope to be better when I come back. The little paddock and plantations here are very bleak. The Bishop of Chester is here now with his father-in-law: he sent us a message last night, and I intend to visit him.

Most of your Ashbourne friends are well. Mr. Kennedy's daughter has married a shoemaker, and he lives with them, and has left his parsonage.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R

L E T T E R CCLXXIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Ashbourne, Nov. 12, 1781.

I HAVE a mind to look on Queeney as my own dear girl; and if I set her a bad example, I ought to counteract it by good precepts; and he that knows the consequences of any fault is best qualified to tell them. I have through my whole progress of authorship honestly endeavoured to teach the right, though I have not been sufficiently diligent to practise it, and have offered mankind my opinion as a rule, but never professed my behaviour as an example.

I shall be very sorry to lose Mr. ———; but why should he so certainly die? * * * needed not have died if he had tried to live. If Mr. ——— will drink a great deal of water, the acrimony that corrodes his bowels will be diluted, if the cause be only acrimony; but I suspect dysenteries to be produced by animalcula, which I know not how to kill.

If the medical man did me good, it was by his benevolence; by his pills I never mended. I am, however, rather better than I was.

Dear Mrs. ———, she has the courage becoming an admiral's lady, but courage is no virtue in her cause.

I have been at Lichfield persecuted with solicitations to read a poem; but I sent the author word, that I would never review the work of an anonymous author; for why should I put my
name

name in the power of one who will not trust me with his own? With this answer Lucy was satisfied, and I think it may satisfy all whom it may concern.

If C——y did nothing for life but add weight to its burden, and darkness to its gloom, he is kindest to those from whom he is furthest. I hope, when I come, not to advance perhaps your pleasures, though even of that I shall be unwilling to despair; but at least not to increase your inconveniencies which would be a very unsuitable return for all the kindness that you have shewn to,

Madam, your, &c.



LETTER CCLXXIV.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAREST MADAM, Ashbourne, Nov. 14, 1781.

HERE is Doctor Taylor, by a resolute adherence to bread and milk, with a better appearance of health than he has had for a long time past; and here am I, living very temperately, but with very little amendment. But the balance is not perhaps very unequal: he has no pleasure like that which I receive from the kind importunity with which you invite me to return. There is no danger of very long delay. There is nothing in this part of the world that can counteract your attraction.

The

The hurt in my leg has grown well slowly, according to Hector's prognostick, and seems now to be almost healed: but my nights are very restless, and the days are therefore heavy, and I have not your conversation to cheer them.

I am willing however to hear that there is happiness in the world, and delight to think on the pleasure diffused among the Burneys. I question if any ship upon the ocean goes out attended with more good wishes than that which carries the fate of Burney. I love all of that breed whom I can be said to know, and one or two whom I hardly know I love upon credit, and love them because they love each other. Of this consanguineous unanimity I have never had much experience; but it appears to me one of the great lenitives of life; but it has this deficiency, that it is never found when distress is mutual—He that has less than enough for himself has nothing to spare, and as every man feels only his own necessities, he is apt to think those of others less pressing, and to accuse them of withholding what in truth they cannot give. He that has his foot firm upon dry ground may pluck another out of the water; but of those that are all afloat, none has any care but for himself.

We do not hear that the deanery is yet given away, and, though nothing is said, I believe much is still thought about it. *Hope travels through*——

I am, dearest of all dear Ladies,

Your, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R CCLXXV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Ashbourne, Nov. 24, 1781.

I SHALL leave this place about the beginning of next week, and shall leave every place as fast as I decently can, till I get back to you, whose kindness is one of my great comforts. I am not well, but have a mind every now and then to think myself better, and I now hope to be better under your care.

It was time to send Kam to another master ; but I am glad that before he went he beat Hector, for he has really the appearance of a superior species to an animal whose whole power is in his legs, and that against the most defenceless of all the inhabitants of the earth.

Dr. Taylor really grows well, and directs his compliments to be sent. I hope Mr. Perkins will be well too.

But why do you tell me nothing of your own health ? Perhaps since the fatal pinch of snuff I may have no care about it. I am glad that you have returned to your meat, for I never expected that abstinence would do you good.

Piozzi, I find, is coming in spite of Miss Harriet's prediction, or second sight, and when *he* comes and *I* come, you will have two about you that love you ; and I question if either of us heartily care how few more you have. But how many soever they may be, I hope you keep your kindness for me, and I have a great mind to have Queeney's kindness too.

Frank's

Frank's wife has brought him a wench; but I cannot yet get intelligence of her colour, and therefore have never told him how much depends upon it.

The weather here is chill, and the air damp. I have been only once at the water-fall, which I found doing as it used to do, and came away. I had not you nor Queeney with me.

Your, &c.



L E T T E R CCLXXVI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Lichfield, Dec. 3, 1781.

I AM now come back to Lichfield, where I do not intend to stay long enough to receive another letter. I have little to do here but to take leave of Mrs. Aston, I hope not the last leave. But Christians may with more confidence than Sophonisba

Avremo tosto lungo lungo spazio
Per stare assieme, et sarà forse eterno.

My time past heavily at Ashbourne, yet I could not easily get away, though Taylor, I sincerely think, was glad to see me go. I have now learned the inconveniences of a winter campaign; but I hope home will make amends for all my foolish sufferings.

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M

I do

I do not like poor Burney's vicarious captainship. Surely the tale of Tantalus was made for him. Surely he will be in time a captain like another captain, of a ship like another ship.

You have got Piezzi again, notwithstanding pretty Harriet's dire denunciations. The Italian translation which he has brought, you will find no great accession to your library, for the writer seems to understand very little English. When we meet we can compare some passages. Pray contrive a multitude of good things for us to do when we meet. Something that may *hold all together*; though if any thing makes *me* love you more, it is going from you.

I am, &c.

—————
 L E T T E R CCLXXVII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Birmingham, Dec. 8, 1781,

I AM come to this place on my way to London and to Streatham. I hope to be in London on Tuesday or Wednesday, and at Streatham on Thursday, by your kind conveyance. I shall have nothing to relate either wonderful or delightful. But remember that you sent me away, and turned me out into the world, and you must take the chance of finding me better or worse. This you
 may

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may know at present, that my affection for you is not diminished, and my expectation from you is encreased. Do not neglect me, nor relinquish me. Nobody will ever love you better or honour you more than,

Madam,

Your, &c.



L E T T E R CCLXXVIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST LADY,

Feb. 16, 1782,

I AM better, but not yet well; but hope springs eternal.—As soon as I can think myself not troublesome, you may be sure of seeing me, for such a place to visit nobody ever had. Dearest Madam, do not think me worse than I am; be sure at least, that whatever happens to me, I am with all the regard that admiration of excellence and gratitude for kindness can excite,

Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCLXXIX.

Mrs. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

DEAR SIR,

Feb. 16, 1782.

I CAN find no paper readily but what is ruled for children's use——'tis all one I suppose, so do excuse it. My house is pretty enough, but wondrous cold, though the season has hitherto been uncommonly mild, which perhaps may affect some people's health. You are used to scorn little things, but must now be contented to acknowledge their influence.—The influence of little people I hope you will never be magnificent enough to despise. Was it not Godeau who was called among the French wits *Le Nain de Julie*? And who wrote so prettily after his great preferment to an old friend in these words? *Au reste, mon ami, n'oubliez jamais le Nain de Julie; qui voudroit bien estre un Geant pour vous servir.* So say I.

Looking over some French *melanges* yesterday, I observed that Mr. L'Abbé D'Artigny uses the word *acointance*; it was a new thing to me, and one of which I had no notion before; Pray how came it into our language?

You are now making haste to be well I hope, and intend to be brisk, and answer questions willingly and kindly. I told Doctor Lawrence, that the *Gravedo* of which you complain should be kept from *increasing long in this case*, and as he is as good a grammarian as he is a physician, I hope he will take the hint. Dear Sir, be well, or how shall we be merry,

With talk of spectacles and pills,
as Swift says?

The

The newspapers would spoil my few comforts that are left if they could ; but you tell me that's only because I have the reputation, whether true or false, of being a *wit* forsooth : and you remember *poor Floretta* who was teized into wishing away her spirit, her beauty, her fortune, and at last even her life, never could bear the bitter water which was to have washed away her wit ; which she resolved to keep with all its consequences.

I am told the new plays this year *are got up* (as the phrase is) very penuriously : our Italian friends tell a comical story, applicable enough, of what happened in their own country : I dare say you have heard it from Saftres. How to ridicule the manager's parsimony, some one said, *Non sapete forse fare una comedia senza spese verune ?* No Signor, *facciamo pur quella d' Adamo e d' Eva, così saranno risparmiati gli abiti. Ma lo scandalo !* says the other. *Oibo ! la faremo all' oscuro, e così risparmierete anche i lumi.*

Is this nonsense enough for one morning ? I cannot bear the thoughts of turning the page to write more such. Accept the best compliments of all belonging to

Your most faithful servant,

H. L. THRALE.

L E T T E R CCLXXX.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Feb. 17, 1782.

SURE such letters would make any man well. I will let them have their full operation upon me; but while I write I am not without a cough. I can however keep it quiet by diacodium, and am in hope that with all other disturbances it will go away, and permit me to enjoy the happiness of being.

Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCLXXXI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST MADAM,

Bolt-court, Feb. 21, 1782.

I CERTAINLY grow better. I lay this morning with such success, that I called before I rose for dry linen. I believe I have had a crisis.

Last night called Sir Richard Jebb; and many people call or send: I am not neglected nor forgotten.

gotten. But let me be always sure of your kindness. I hope to try again this week whether your house is yet so cold, for to be away from you, if I did not think our separation likely to be short, how could I endure? You are a dear dear lady, and your kind attention is a great part of what life affords to,

Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCLXXXII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST OF ALL DEAR LADIES, March 14, 1782.

THAT Povilleri should write these verses is impossible. I am angry at Sastres.

Seven ounces! Why I sent a letter to Dr. Lawrence, who is ten times more *timor*some than is your Jebb, and he came and stood by while one vein was opened with too small an orifice, and bled eight ounces and stopped. Then another vein was opened, which ran eight more. And here am I sixteen ounces lighter, for I have had no dinner.

I think the loss of blood has done no harm; whether it has done good, time will tell. I am glad that I do not sink without resistance.

I am, Dear Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R

L E T T E R CCLXXXIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

MADAM,

April.

I HAVE been very much out of order since you sent me away ; but why should I tell you, who do not care, nor desire to know ? I dined with Mr. Paradise on Monday, with the Bishop of St. Asaph yesterday, with the Bishop of Chester I dine to-day, and with the Academy on Saturday, with Mr. Hoole on Monday, and with Mrs. Garrick on Thursday the 2d of May, and then—what care you ? *what then ?*

The news run, that we have taken seventeen French transports——that Langton's lady is lying down with her eighth child, all alive——and Mrs. Carter's Miss Sharpe is going to marry a school-master sixty-two years old.

Do not let Mr. Piozzi nor any body else put me quite out of your head, and do not think that any body will love you like

Your, &c.

L E T T E R

L E T T E R CCLXXXIV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST MADAM,

April 30, 1782.

I HAVE had a fresh cold and been very poorly. But I was yesterday at Mr. Hoole's, where were Miss Reynolds and many others. I am going to the club.

Since Mrs. Garrick's invitation I have a letter from Miss Moore, to engage me for the evening. I have an appointment to Miss Monkton, and another with Lady Sheffield at Mrs. Way's.

Two days ago Mr. Cumberland had his third night, which, after all expences, put into his own pocket five pounds. He has lost his plume.

Mrs. S—— refused to sing, at the Duchess of Devonshire's request, a song to the Prince of Wales. They pay for the —— neither principal nor interest; and poor Garrick's funeral expences are yet unpaid, though the undertaker is broken. Could you have a better purveyor for a little scandal? But I wish I was at Streatham. I beg Miss to come early, and I may perhaps reward you with more mischief.

I am, dearest and dearest Lady,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R

170 LETTERS TO AND FROM

L E T T E R CCLXXXV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

MADAM,

May 8, 1782.

YESTERDAY I was all so bonny, as who but me? At night my cough drove me to diacodium, and this morning I suspect that diacodium will drive me to sleep in the chair. Breath however is better, and I shall try to escape the other bleeding, for I am of the chymical sect, which holds phlebotomy in abhorrence.

But it is not plenty nor diminution of blood that can make me more or less,

My dearest dear Lady,

Your, &c.

I send my compliments to my dear Queeney.



L E T T E R CCLXXXVI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

MADAM,

London, June 4, 1782.

WISELY was it said by him who said it first, that this world is all ups and downs. You know, dearest Lady, that when I prest your hand at part-
ing

ing I was rather down. When I came hither, I ate my dinner well, but was so harrassed by the cough, that Mr. Strahan said, it was an extremity which he could not have believed without the sensible and true avouch of his own observation. I was indeed almost sinking under it, when Mrs. Williams happened to cry out that such a cough should be stilled by opium or any means. I took yesterday half an ounce of bark, and knew not whether opium would counteract it, but remembering no prohibition in the medical books, and knowing that to quiet the cough with opium was one of Lawrence's last orders, I took two grains, which gave me not sleep indeed, but rest, and that rest has given me strength and courage.

This morning to my bed-side came dear Sir Richard. I told him of the opium, and he approved it, and told me, if I went to Oxford, which he rather advised, that I should strengthen the constitution by the bark, tame the cough with opium, keep the body open, and support myself by liberal nutriment.

As to the journey I know not that it will be necessary, *desine mollium tandem querularum.*—This day I dined upon skate, pudding, goose, and your asparagus, and could have eaten more, but was prudent.

Pray for me, dear Madam; I hope the tide has turned. The change that I feel is more than I durst have hoped, or than I thought possible; but there has yet not passed a whole day, and I may rejoice perhaps too soon. Come and see me, and when you think best, upon due consideration, take me away.

I am, dear Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER

LETTER CCLXXXVII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM.

Oxford, June 12, 1782.

MY letter was perhaps peevish, but it was not unkind. I should have cared little about a wanton expression, if there had been no kindness.

I find no particular salubrity in this air, my respiration is very laborious; my appetite is good, and my sleep commonly long and quiet; but a very little motion disables me.

I dine to-day with Dr. Adams, and to-morrow with Dr. Wetherel. Yesterday Dr. Edwards invited some men from Exeter college, whom I liked very well. These variations of company help the mind, though they cannot do much for the body. But the body receives some help from a cheerful mind.

Keep up some kindness for me; when I am with you again, I hope to be less burthenfome, by being less sick.

I am, dearest Lady,

Your, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R CCLXXXVIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Oxford, June 13, 1782.

YESTERDAY a little physick drove away a great part of my cough, but I am still very much obstructed in my respiration, and so soon tired with walking, that I have hardly ventured one unnecessary step. Of my long illness much more than this does not remain, but this is very burthenfome. I sleep pretty well, and have appetite enough, but I cheat it with fish.

Yesterday I dined at Dr. Adams's with Miss More, and other personages of eminence. To-day I am going to Dr. Wetherel? and thus day goes after day, not wholly without amusement.

I think not to stay here long. Till I am better it is not prudent to sit long in the libraries, for the weather is yet so cold, that in the penury of fuel, for which we think ourselves very unhappy, I have yet met with none so frugal as to sit without fire.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

Poor Davis complained that he had not received his money for Boyle.

L E T T E R

L E T T E R C C L X X X I X .

Mrs. T H R A L E to Dr. J O H N S O N .

D E A R S I R ,

Streatham, June 14.

I AM glad you confess yourself peevish, for confession must precede amendment. Do not study to be more unhappy than you are, and if you can eat and sleep well, do not be frightened, for there can be no real danger. Are you acquainted with Dr. Lee, the master of Baliol College? And are you not delighted with his gaiety of manners and youthful vivacity now that he is eighty-six years old? I never heard a more perfect or excellent pun than his, when some one told him how in a late dispute among the Privy Counsellors, the Lord Chancellor struck the table with such violence that he split it: No, no, no, replied the Master dryly, I can hardly persuade myself that *he split the Table*, though I believe *he divided the Board*. Will you send me any thing better from Oxford than this? for there must be no more fastidiousness now; no more refusing to laugh at a good quibble, when you so loudly profess the want of amusement and the necessity of diversion. How the people of this age do cry for rattles is indeed little to its credit, for knowledge is diffused most certainly, if not increased, and that ought to stand instead of perpetual variety one would think. Apropos to general improvement: I was reading the Spectator to Sophy while my maid papered my curls yester-morning, it was the 3d vol. 217, where the man complains of an indelicate mistress, who said on some occasion that her stomach ach'd, and

and lamented how her teeth had got a feed stuck between them. — The woman that dressed me was so astonished at this grossness, though common enough in Addison's time one sees, that she cried out, Well Madam! surely that could never have been a *lady* who used expressions like those.

I much wonder whether this refinement has spread all over the Continent, or whether 'tis confined to our own island: when we were in France we could form little judgment, as our time was passed chiefly among English; yet I recollect that one fine lady, who entertained us very splendidly, put her mouth to the teapot, and blew in the spout when it did not pour freely. My maid Peggy would not have touched the tea after such an operation. Was it convenient, and agreeable, and wise, and fine, I should like to see the world *beyond sea* very much;

But fate has fast bound her
With Styx nine times round her.

So your friend must look on the waves at Bright-helmstone without breathing a wish to cross them.

Mean time let us be as *merry* as reading Burton upon *Melancholy* will make us. You bid me study that book in your absence, and now, What have I found? Why, I have found, or fancied, that he has been cruelly plundered: that Milton's first idea of *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* were suggested by the verses at the beginning; that Savage's Speech of Suicide in the *Wanderer*, grew up out of a passage you probably remember towards the 216th page; that Swift's Tale of the Woman that holds water in her mouth, to regain her husband's love by silence, had its source in the same farrago; and that there is an odd similitude between my Lord's trick upon Sly the Tinker, in Shakespear's *Taming*

Taming of the Shrew, and some stuff I have been reading in Burton.

And now, Dear Sir, be as comfortable as you can, and do not dun me for that kindness which has never been withheld, only because it is cold weather and you want employment; but be gentle and tranquil like Dr. Adams, or gay and flashy like Dr. Lee, and then——what then? Why then you will deserve Miss Adams's good will, and Miss More's esteem, added to the humble service and attentive regard of your ever equally

Faithful, &c.

H. L. THRALE.

Sir Richard asks after you with very tender care indeed: what would you have of us all that you cannot command? He is among those who would do any thing in the world to oblige you.



L E T T E R CCXC.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Oxford, June 17, 1782.

I HAVE found no sudden alteration or amendment, but I am grown better by degrees. My cough is not now very troublesome to myself, nor I hope to others. My breath is still short and encumbered; I do not sleep well, but I lie easy. By
change

change of place, succession of company, and necessity of talking, much of the terror that had seized me seems to be dispelled.

Oxford has done, I think, what for the present it can do, and I am going flyly to take a place in the coach for Wednesday, and you or my sweet Queeney will fetch me on Thursday, and see what you can make of me.

To-day I am going to dine with Dr. Wheeler, and to-morrow Dr. Edwards has invited Miss Adams and Miss More. Yesterday I went with Dr. Edwards to his living. He has really done all that he could do for my relief or entertainment, and really drives me away by doing too much.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

When I come back to retirement, it will be great charity in you to let me come back to something else.



L E T T E R CCXCI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST LADY,

June 28, 1781.

I WAS blooded on Saturday; I think, not copiously enough, but the Doctor would permit no more. I have however his consent to bleed again to-day.

to-day. Since I left you I have eaten very little, on Friday chiefly broth, on Saturday nothing but some bread in the morning, on Sunday nothing but some bread and three roasted apples. I try to get well and wish to see you; but if I came, I should only cough and cough. Mr. Steevens, who is with me, says that my hearing is returned, We are here all three sick, and poor Levet is gone.

Do not add to my other distresses any diminution of kindness for,

Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R C C X C I I .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

DEAR MADAM,

Saturday, July 8, 1782.

PERHAPS some of your people may call to-morrow. I have this day taken a passage to Oxford for Monday. Not to frisk as you express it with very unfeeling irony, but to catch at the hopes of better health. The change of place may do something. To leave the house where so much has been suffered affords some pleasure. When I write to you write to me again, and let me have the pleasure of knowing that I am still considered as,

Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R

LETTER CCXCIII.

TO MRS. THRALE.

DEAR LADY,

Dec. 20, 1782.

I HOPE the worst is at last over. I had a very good night, and slept very long. You can hardly think how bad I have been while you were in all your altitudes, at the Opera, and all the fine places, and thinking little of me. Saftres has been very good. Queeney never sent me a kind word. I hope however to be with you in a short time, and shew you a man again.

I am, Madam,

Yours, &c.



L E T T E R C C X C I V .

Mrs. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

MY health, my children, and my fortune, Dear Sir, are coming fast to an end I think—not so my sorrows: Harriet is dead, and Cicely is dying:

I had taken an emetic when the express came, and have ordered a post-chaise and chamomile tea at this instant. A letter from London bids me make haste thither, and not sit *philosophically* at Bath. This is from one of the guardians. I am more ill now than I can express, of which Dr. Woodward is witness; who says, if I *do* go, and add the hooping-cough to that which already has worn me to a skeleton, it will be my last trouble in this world. So much the better; I am as tired of life as can be, but will talk with dear Dr. Pepys once more before I leave it. If he cannot save Cecilia, nobody can I am sure; Sir Richard is with her twice a-day besides: when I am there I will not touch her, nor tempt death so madly though weary of living.

Was it not Torquato Tasso who was asked once what use he made of his *philosophy*? and did he not reply thus? *I have learned from it to endure your malice*? It ought to have been my answer to the epistle of to-day.

Adieu, Dear Sir, I *must* lie down a moment, then get into the chaise, and drive all night till I reach Ray and Fry's school: no need to see hateful London, is there? I will avoid it, if possible, to be sure.

This is Good Friday night, and no Christian ought to complain of hard sufferings on this anniversary of harder sufferings inflicted on his Saviour himself. I will therefore cease repining, and do my duty cheerfully.

My dear Sir, a sudden illness prevents my ability to get into the chaise, so I'll send this letter by the coach. If I have any life left I will use it to go see Cecilia to-morrow. I am then and always
equally your obliged and faithful servant,

H. L. THRALE.

You will not know me when I do come.

Sharp misery has worn me to the bone.

Dr. SAMUEL JOHNSON, 181

L E T T E R CCXCV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

London, May-day, 1783.

I AM glad that you went to Streatham, though you could not save the dear pretty little girl. I loved her, for she was Thrale's and your's, and by her dear father's appointment in some sort mine: I love you all, and therefore cannot without regret see the phalanx broken, and reflect that you and my other dear girls are deprived of one that was born your friend. To such friends, every one that has them, has recourse at last, when it is discovered, and discovered it seldom fails to be, that the fortuitous friendships of inclination or vanity are at the mercy of a thousand accidents. But we must still our disquiet with remembering that, where there is no guilt, all is for the best. I am glad to hear that Cecily is so near recovery.

For some days after your departure I was pretty well, but I have begun to languish again, and last night was very tedious and oppressive. I excused myself to-day from dining with General Paoli, where I love to dine, but I was griped by the talons of necessity.

On Saturday I dined, as is usual, at the opening of the Exhibition. Our company was splendid, whether more numerous than at any former time I know not. Our tables seem always full. On Monday, if I am told truth, were received at the door one hundred and ninety pounds, for the admission of three thousand eight hundred spectators. Supposing the show open ten hours, and the spectators

tators staying one with another each an hour, the rooms never had fewer than three hundred and eighty jostling against each other. Poor Lowe met some discouragement, but I interposed for him, and prevailed.

Mr. Barry's exhibition was opened the same day, and a book is published to recommend it, which, if you read it, you will find decorated with some satirical pictures of Sir Joshua Reynolds and others. I have not escaped. —You must however think with some esteem of Barry for the comprehension of his design.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.



LETTER CCXCVI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

London, May 8, 1783,

I THOUGHT your letter long in coming. I suppose it is true that I looked but languid at the exhibition, but have been worse since. Last Wednesday, the Wednesday of last week, I came home ill from Mr. Jodrel's, and after a tedious, oppressive, impatient night, sent an excuse to General Paoli, and took on Thursday two brisk catharticks and a dose of calomel. Little things do me no good.

good. At night I was much better. Next day cathartick again, and the third day opium for my cough. I lived without flesh all the three days. The recovery was more than I expected. I went to church on Sunday quite at ease.

The exhibition prospers so much, that Sir Joshua says it will maintain the academy. He estimates the probable amount at three thousand pounds. Steevens is of opinion that Croft's books will sell for near three times as much as they cost, which however is not more than might be expected.

Favour me with a direction to Musgrave of Ireland; I have a charitable office to propose to him. Is he Knight or Baronet?

My present circle of enjoyment is as narrow for me as the Circus for Mrs. Montague. When I first settled in this neighbourhood I had Richardson and Lawrence, and Mrs. Allen at hand. I had Mrs. Williams, then no bad companion, and Levet for a long time always to be had. If I now go out I must go far for company, and at last come back to two sick and discontented women, who can hardly talk, if they had any thing to say, and whose hatred of each other makes one great exercise of their faculties.

But, with all these evils, positive and privative, my health in its present humour promises to mend, and I, in my present humour, promise to take care of it, and if we both keep our words, we may yet have a brush at the cobwebs in the sky.

Let my dear loves write to me, and do you write often yourself to,

Dear Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCXCVII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

London, June 5, 1783.

WH Y do you write so seldom? I was very glad of your letter. You were used formerly to write more, when I know not why you should have had much more to say. Do not please yourself with showing me that you can forget me, who do not forget you.

Mr. Desmoulin's account of my health rather wants confirmation. But complaints are useless.

I have, by the migration of one of my ladies, more peace at home; but I remember an old savage chief that says of the Romans with great indignation—*ubi solitudinem faciunt, pacem appetant.*

Mr. ——— was not calamity, it was his sister, to whom I am afraid the term is now strictly applicable, for she seems to have fallen some way into obscurity; I am afraid by a palsy.

Whence your pity arises for the thief that has made the hangman idle, I cannot discover. I am sorry indeed for every suicide, but I suppose he would have gone to the gallows without being lamented.

You will soon see that Miss H——, if she finds countenance, and gets scholars, will conquer her vexations. Is not Susy likewise one of her pupils? I owe Susy a letter, which I purpose to pay next time.

I can

I can tell you of no new thing in town, but Dr. Maxwell, whose lady is by ill health detained with two little babies at Bath.

You give a cheerful account of your way of life. I hope you will settle into tranquillity.

When I can repay you such a narrative of my felicity, you shall see description.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R CCXCVIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Oxford, June 11, 1783.

YESTERDAY I came to Oxford without fatigue or inconvenience. I read in the coach before dinner. I dined moderately, and slept well; but find my breath not free this morning.

Dr. Edwards, to whom I wrote word of my purpose to come, has defeated his own kindness by its excess. He has gone out of his own rooms for my reception, and therefore I cannot decently stay long, unless I can change my abode, which it will not be very easy to do: nor do I know what attractions I shall find here. Here is Miss Moore at Dr. Adams's, with whom I shall dine to-morrow. Of my adventures and observations I shall inform you, and beg you to write to me at Mr. Parker's, bookseller.

I hope

I hope Queeney has got rid of her influenza, and that you escape it. If I had Queeney here, how would I shew her all the places. I hope, however, I shall not want company in my stay here.

I am, Dear Madam,

Your, &c.

—————
L E T T E R CCXCIX.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

London, June 13, 1783.

YESTERDAY were brought hither two parcels directed to *Mrs. Thrale, to the care of Dr. Johnson*. By what the touch can discover, they contain something of which cloaths are made; and I suspect them to be Misgrave's long-expected present. You will order them to be called for, or let me know whither I shall send them.

Crutchley has had the gout, but is abroad again. Seward called on me yesterday. He is going only for a few weeks; first to Paris, and then to Flanders, to contemplate the pictures of Claude Lorraine; and he asked me if that was not as good a way as any of spending time—that time which returns no more—of which however a great part seems to be very foolishly spent, even by the wisest and the best.

That

That time at least is not lost in which the evils of life are relieved, and therefore the moments which you bestow on Miss H—— are properly employed. She seems to make an uncommon impression upon you. What has she done or suffered out of the common course of things? I love a little secret history.

Poor Dr. Lawrence and his youngest son died almost on the same day.

Mrs. Dobson, the directress of rational conversation, did not translate Petrarch, but epitomised a very bulky French Life of Petrarch. She translated, I think, the Memoirs of D'Aubigné.

Your last letter was very pleasing; it expressed kindness to me, and some degree of placid acquiescence in your present mode of life, which is, I think, the best which is at present within your reach.

My powers and attention have for a long time been almost wholly employed upon my health, I hope not wholly without success, but solitude is very tedious.

I am, Madam, Your, &c.

LETTER CCC.

Mrs. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

Bath, June 15. 1783.

I BELIEVE it is too true, my dear Sir, that you think on little except yourself and your own health, but then they are subjects on which every one

one else would think too—and that is a great consolation.

I am willing enough to employ all my thoughts upon *myself*, but there is nobody here who wishes to think with or about me, so I am very sick and a little fullen, and disposed now and then to say like king David, *My lovers and my friends have been put away from me, and my acquaintance hid out of my sight*. If the last letter I wrote shewed some degree of placid acquiescence in a situation, which, however displeasing, is the best I can get at just now;—I pray God to keep me in that disposition, and to lay no more calamity upon me which may again tempt me to murmur and complain. In the mean time assure yourself of my undiminished kindness and veneration: they have been long out of accident's power either to lessen or increase.

So Mr. Seward is going abroad again. I see no harm in his resolution, though the manner of expressing it was likely enough to offend you: yet he is not a man whom any one can justly reproach with negligence of duty; he does more good than almost any person of twice his fortune, and while he is looking at the works of Claude Lorraine he will certainly be doing no mischief.

The professors of *Ennui* are a very dangerous race of mortals; for, preferring any occupation to none, they are liable to make many people unhappy by their officious assiduities, while to themselves they stand perfectly exculpated by the remark that *a man must do something—or be killed with Ennui*: how fortunate for society when like Seward they seek only to give away their money all winter to persons who want it, and go to Flanders in summer to look at the Claude Lorraines!

What

What Miss H—— had suffered before our acquaintance began I know not. She now endures much from real, and more from fancied illness. Her talents are uncommon for work, and she is a proof that work will not suffice to keep the imagination quiet. She feels like Pekuah, that *the mind will easily straggle from the fingers*, and that *miser of heart cannot be much solaced by stiken flowers*.

Poor Dr. Lawrence and his son are dead then : I am very sorry ; he was among the few parents I have known who preferred the virtue and happiness of their children to the delight of seeing them grow rich and splendid ; and you once told me, that one of his sons (I never heard which) was early bent on obtaining that opulence which is as seldom sought for by youth——Is it that boy who is now dead ?

That *you* should be solitary is a sad thing, and a strange one too, when every body is willing to drop in, and for a quarter of an hour at least, save you from a *tête à tête* with yourself : I never could catch a moment when you were alone whilst we were in London, and Miss Thrale says the same thing. It would have been a fine advantage indeed could she have seen Oxford now in your company ; when we enjoyed it, she was too young to profit of the circumstance. 'Tis so throughout the world I believe : nothing happens of good to us while we can fully use it : every little felicity which does come, comes at a time when waiting for it has spoiled our appetite——

When youth and genial years are flown,
And all the life of life is gone.

Could I however flatter myself with the hopes of a fine clear evening after my various day, I would
bear

bear the afternoon storms better than I do—and who knows that it is yet impossible?

Farewel, dear Sir: had I health and spirits as I used to have, I would write as I used to do; but I had then a husband and sons, and for a long time after I knew you, a mother such as no one ever had but me, and such as I sincerely wish my daughters were likely to have in your truly faithful servant,

H. L. THRALE.

LETTER CCCI.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

Bolt-court, Fleet-street,
June 19, 1783.

I AM sitting down in no cheerful solitude to write a narrative which would once have affected you with tenderness and sorrow, but which you will perhaps pass over now with the careless glance of frigid indifference. For this diminution of regard however, I know not whether I ought to blame you, who may have reasons which I cannot know, and I do not blame myself, who have for a great part of human life done you what good I could; and have never done you evil.

I had

I had been disordered in the usual way, and had been relieved by the usual methods, by opium and catharticks, but had rather lessened my dose of opium.

On Monday the 16th I sat for my picture, and walked a considerable way with little inconvenience. In the afternoon and evening I felt myself light and easy, and began to plan schemes of life. Thus I went to bed, and in a short time waked and sat up, as has been long my custom, when I felt a confusion and indistinctness in my head, which lasted I suppose about half a minute; I was alarmed, and prayed God, that however he might afflict my body, he would spare my understanding. This prayer, that I might try the integrity of my faculties, I made in Latin verse. The lines were not very good, but I knew them not to be very good: I made them easily, and concluded myself to be unimpaired in my faculties.

Soon after I perceived that I had suffered a paralytick stroke, and that my speech was taken from me. I had no pain, and so little dejection in this dreadful state, that I wondered at my own apathy, and considered that perhaps death itself when it should come would excite less horror than seems now to attend it.

In order to rouse the vocal organs I took two drams. Wine has been celebrated for the production of eloquence. I put myself into violent motion, and I think repeated it; but all was vain. I then went to bed, and, strange as it may seem, I think, slept. When I saw light, it was time to contrive what I should do. Though God stopped my speech he left me my hand, I enjoyed a mercy which was not granted to my dear friend Lawrence, who now perhaps overlooks me as I am writing, and rejoices that I have what he wanted.

My

My first note was necessarily to my servant, who came in talking, and could not immediately comprehend why he should read what I put into his hands.

I then wrote a card to Mr. Allen, that I might have a discreet friend at hand to act as occasion should require. In penning this note I had some difficulty, my hand, I knew not how nor why, made wrong letters. I then wrote to Dr. Taylor to come to me, and bring Dr. Heberden, and I sent to Dr. Brocklesby, who is my neighbour. My physicians are very friendly and very disinterested, and give me great hopes, but you may imagine my situation. I have so far recovered my vocal powers, as to repeat the Lord's Prayer with no very imperfect articulation. My memory, I hope, yet remains as it was; but such an attack produces solicitude for the safety of every faculty.

How this will be received by you I know not. I hope you will sympathise with me; but perhaps

My Mistress gracious, mild, and good,
Cries! Is he dumb? 'Tis time he shou'd.

But can this be possible? I hope it cannot. I hope that what, when I could speak, I spoke of you, and to you, will be in a sober and serious hour remembered by you; and surely it cannot be remembered but with some degree of kindness. I have loved you with virtuous affection; I have honoured you with sincere esteem. Let not all our endearments be forgotten, but let me have in this great distress your pity and your prayers. You see I yet turn to you with my complaints as a settled and unalienable friend; do not, do not drive me from you, for I have not deserved either neglect or hatred.

To

To the girls, who do not write often, for Susy has written only once, and Miss Thrale owes me a letter, I earnestly recommend, as their guardian and friend, that they remember their Creator in the days of their youth.

I suppose you may wish to know how my disease is treated by the physicians. They put a blister upon my back, and two from my ear to my throat, one on a side. The blister on the back has done little, and those on the throat have not risen. I bullied and bounced, (it sticks to our last sand)-and compelled the apothecary to make his salve according to the Edinburgh Dispensatory, that it might adhere better. I have two on now of my own prescription. They likewise give me salt of hartshorn, which I take with no great confidence, but am satisfied that what can be done is done for me.

O God! give me comfort and confidence in Thee: forgive my sins; and if it be thy good pleasure, relieve my diseases for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

I am almost ashamed of this querulous letter, but now it is written, let it go.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R C C C I I .

To Mrs. T H R A L E,

DEAREST MADAM,

London, June 20, 1783.

I THINK to send you for some time a regular diary. You will forgive the gross images which disease must necessarily present. Dr. Lawrence said, that medical treatises should be always in Latin.

The two vesicatories which I procured with so much trouble did not perform well, for, being applied to the lower part of the fauces, a part always in motion, their adhesion was continually broken. The back, I hear, is very properly flayed.

I have now healing application to the cheeks, and have my head covered with one formidable diffusion of cantharides, from which Dr. Heberden assures me that experience promises great effects. He told me likewise, that my utterance has been improved since yesterday, of which, however, I was less certain; though doubtless they who see me at intervals can best judge.

I never had any distortion of the countenance, but what Dr. Brocklesby called a little prolapsus, which went away the second day.

I was this day directed to eat flesh, and I dined very copiously upon roasted lamb and boiled pease: I then went to sleep in a chair, and when I waked, I found Dr. Brocklesby sitting by me, and fell to talking with him in such a manner as made me glad, and, I hope, made me thankful. The

Doctor

Doctor fell to repeating Juvenal's ninth satire;
but I let him see that the province was mine.

I am to take wine to-night; and hope it will do
me good.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R CCCIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM.

London, June 21, 1783.

I CONTINUE my journal. When I went to bed last night, I found the new covering of my head uneasy, not painful, rather too warm. I had however a comfortable and placid night. My physicians this morning thought my amendment not inconsiderable; and my friends who visited me said, that my look was sprightly and cheerful. Nobody has shewn more affection than Paradise, Langton and he were with me a long time to-day. I was almost tired.

When my friends were gone I took another liberal dinner, such as my physicians recommended, and slept after it, but without such evident advantage as was the effect of yesterday's *fiesta*. Perhaps the sleep was not quite so sound, for I am harassed by a very disagreeable operation of the cantharides, which I am endeavouring to controul by copious dilution.

My disorders are in other respects less than usual ; my disease, whatever it was, seems collected into this one dreadful effect. My breath is free ; the constrictions of the chest are suspended, and my nights pass without oppression.

To-day I received a letter of consolation and encouragement from an unknown hand, without a name, kindly and piously, though not enthusiastically written.

I had just now from Mr. Pepys a message, enquiring in your name after my health, of this I can give no account.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.



LETTER CCCIV.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

London, June 23, 1783.

I THANK you for your kind letter, and will continue my diary. On the night of the 21st I had very little rest, being kept awake by an effect of the cantharides, not indeed formidable, but very tiresome and painful. On the 22d the physicians released me from the salts of hartshorn. The cantharides continued their persecution, but I was set free from it at night. I had however not much sleep, but I hope for more to-night. The
vesications

vesications on my back and face are héaling, and only that on my head continues to operate.

My friends tell me that my power of utterance improves daily, and Dr. Heberden declares that he hopes to find me almost well to-morrow.

Palfies are more common than I thought. I have been visited by four friends who have had each a stroke, and one of them two.

Your offer, dear Madam, of coming to me, is charmingly kind; but I will lay up for future use, and then let it not be considered as obsolete; a time of dereliction may come, when I may have hardly any other friend, but in the present exigency I cannot name one who has been deficient in civility or attention. What man can do for man has been done for me. Write to me very often.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R CCCV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

TH E journal now, like other journals, grows very *dry*, as it is not diversified either by operations or events. Less and less is done, and I thank God, less and less is suffered every day. The physicians seem to think that little more needs to be done. I find that they consulted to-day about sending me to Bath, and thought it needless. Dr. Heberden takes leave to-morrow.

This day I watered the garden, and did not find the watering-pots more heavy than they have hitherto been, and my breath is more free.

Poor dear ——— has just been here with a present. If it ever falls in your way to do him good, let him have your favour.

Both Queeney's letter and yours gave me to-day great pleasure. Think as well and as kindly of me as you can, but do not flatter me. Cool reciprocations of esteem are the great comforts of life; hyperbolical praise only corrupts the tongue of the one, and the ear of the other.

London,
June 24, 1783.

I am, &c.

Your letter has no date.

L E T T E R

L E T T E R CCCVI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST MADAM, London, June 28, 1783.

YOUR letter is just such as I desire, and as from you I hope always to deserve.

The black dog I hope always to resist, and in time to drive, though I am deprived of almost all those that used to help me. The neighbourhood is impoverished. I had once Richardson and Lawrence in my reach. Mrs. Allen is dead. My house has lost Levet, a man who took interest in every thing, and therefore ready at conversation. Mrs. Williams is so weak that she can be a companion no longer. When I rise my breakfast is solitary, the black dog waits to share it, from breakfast to dinner he continues barking, except that Dr. Brocklesby for a little keeps him at a distance. Dinner with a sick woman you may venture to suppose not much better than solitary. After dinner, what remains but to count the clock, and hope for that sleep which I can scarce expect. Night comes at last, and some hours of restlessness and confusion bring me again to a day of solitude. What shall exclude the black dog from an habitation like this? If I were a little richer, I would perhaps take some cheerful female into the house.

Your Bath news shews me new calamities. I am afraid Mrs. L——s is left with a numerous family, very slenderly supplied. Mrs. Sheward is an old maid, I am afraid, yet *sur le pavé*.

——, if he were well, would be well enough liked; his daughter has powers and knowledge, but no art of making them agreeable.

I must

I must touch my journal. Last night fresh flies were put to my head, and hindered me from sleeping. To-day I fancy myself incommoded by heat.

I have, however, watered the garden both yesterday and to-day, just as I watered the laurels in the island.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.



LETTER CCCVII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

AMONG those that have enquired after me, Sir Philip is one; and Dr. Burney was one of those who came to see me. I have had no reason to complain of indifference or neglect. Dick Burney is come home five inches taller.

Yesterday in the evening I went to church, and have been to day to see the great burning glass, which does more than was ever done before by the transmission of the rays, but is not equal in power to those which reflect them. It wastes a diamond placed in the focus, but causes no diminution of pure gold. Of the rubies exposed to its action, one was made more vivid, the other paler. To see the glass, I climbed up stairs to the garret, and then up a ladder to the leads, and talked to
the

the artist rather too long; for my voice, though clear and distinct for a little while, soon tires and falters. The organs of speech are yet very feeble, but will I hope be by the mercy of God finally restored: at present, like any other weak limb, they can endure but little labour at once. Would you not have been very sorry for me when I could scarcely speak?

Fresh cantharides were this morning applied to my head, and are to be continued some time longer. If they play me no treacherous tricks, they give me very little pain.

Let me have your kindness and your prayers; and think on me, as on a man who, for a very great portion of your life, has done you all the good he could, and desires still to be considered,

Madam,

Your, &c.



L E T T E R CCCVIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST MADAM, London, July 1, 1783.

THIS morning I took the air by a ride to Hampstead, and this afternoon I dined with the club. But fresh cantharides were this day applied to my head.

Mr. Cator called on me to-day, and told that he had invited you back to Streatham. I shewed the

the unfitness of your return thither, till the neighbourhood should have lost its habits of depredation, and he seemed to be satisfied. He invited me very kindly and cordially to try the air of Beckenham, and pleased me very much by his affectionate attention to Miss Vezy. There is much good in his character, and much usefulness in his knowledge.

Queeney seems now to have forgotten me. Of the different appearance of the hills and vallies an account may perhaps be given, without the supposition of any prodigy. If she had been out and the evening was breezy, the exhalations would rise from the low grounds very copiously; and the wind that swept and cleared the hills, would only by its cold condense the vapours of the sheltered vallies.

Murphy is just gone from me; he visits me very kindly, and I have no unkindness to complain of.

I am sorry that Sir Philip's request was not treated with more respect, nor can I imagine what has put them so much out of humour: I hope their business is prosperous.

I hope that I recover by degrees, but my nights are restless; and you will suppose the nervous system to be somewhat enfeebled.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R CCCIX.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

London, July 3, 1783.

DR. Brocklesby yesterday dismissed the cantharides, and I can now find a soft place upon my pillow. Last night was cool, and I rested well, and this morning I have been a friend at a poetical difficulty. Here is now a glimpse of day-light again; but how near is the evening—none can tell, and I will not prognosticate; we all know that from none of us it can be far distant; may none of us know this in vain!

I went, as I took care to boast, on Tuesday, to the club, and hear that I was thought to have performed as well as usual. I dined on fish, with the wing of a small Turkey chick, and left roast beef, goose, and venison pye untouched. I live much on peas, and never had them so good, for so long a time, in any year that I can remember.

When do you go to Weymouth? and why do you go? only I suppose to a new place, and the reason is sufficient to those who have no reason to withhold them.

* * * knows well enough how to live on four hundred a year, but where is he to have it? Had * * * any thing of his own unsettled?

I am glad that Mrs. Sheward talks of me, and loves me, and have in this still scene of life great comfort in reflecting that I have given very few reason to hate me; I hope scarcely any man has known me closely but for his benefit, or cursorily but to his innocent entertainment. Tell me, you
that

that know me best, whether this be true, that according to your answer I may continue my practice, or try to mend it.

Along with your kind letter yesterday came one likewise very kind from the Astons at Lichfield; but I do not know whether, as the summer is so far advanced, I shall travel so far, though I am not without hopes that frequent change of air may fortify me against the winter, which has been, in modern phrase, of late years very *inimical* to,

Madam, Your, &c.



LETTER CCCX.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

London, July 5, 1783.

THAT Dr. * * * * is offended I am very sorry, but if the same state of things should recur, I could not do better. Dr. Broklesby is, you know, my neighbour, and could be ready at call; he had for some time very diligently solicited my friendship: I depended much upon the skill of Dr. Heberden, and him I had seen lately at Broklesby's. Heberden I could not bear to miss, Brocklesby could not decently be missed, and to call three, had made me ridiculous by the appearance of self-importance. Mine was one of those unhappy cases in which something must be wrong. I can only be sorry.

I have

I have now no Doctor, but am left to shift for myself as opportunity shall serve. I am going next week with * * * to * * * *, where I expect not to stay long. Eight children in a small house will probably make a chorus not very diverting. My purpose is to change the air frequently this summer.

Of the imitation of my stile, in a criticism on Gray's Church-yard, I forgot to make mention. The author is, I believe, utterly unknown, for Mr. Steevens cannot hunt him out. I know little of it, for though it was sent me I never cut the leaves open. I had a letter with it representing it to me as my own work ; in such an account to the publick there may be humour, but to myself it was neither serious nor comical. I suspect the writer to be wrongheaded; as to the noise which it makes I have never heard it, and am inclined to believe that few attacks either of ridicule or invective make much noise, but by the help of those that they provoke.*

I think Queeney's silence has something either of laziness or unkindness ; and I wish her free from both, for both are very unamiable, and will both increase by indulgence. Sufy is I believe at a loss for matter. I shall be glad to see pretty Sophy's production.

I hope I still continue mending. My organs are yet feeble.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCCXI.

TO MISS SUSANNA THRALE.

DEAREST MISS SUSY,

WHEN you favoured me with your letter, you seemed to be in want of materials to fill it, having met with no great adventures either of peril or delight, nor done or suffered any thing out of the common course of life.

When you have lived longer, and considered more, you will find the common course of life very fertile of observation and reflection. Upon the common course of life must our thoughts and our conversation be generally employed. Our general course of life must denominate us wise or foolish; happy or miserable: if it is well regulated we pass on prosperously and smoothly; as it is neglected we live in embarrassment, perplexity, and uneasiness.

Your time, my love, passes, I suppose, in devotion, reading, work, and company. Of your devotions, in which I earnestly advise you to be very punctual, you may not perhaps think it proper to give me an account; and of work, unless I understood it better, it will be of no great use to say much; but books and company will always supply you with materials for your letters to me, as I shall always be pleased to know what you are reading, and with what you are pleased; and shall take great delight in knowing what impression new modes or new characters make upon you, and to observe with what attention you distinguish the
temper,

tempers, dispositions, and abilities of your companions.

A letter may be always made out of the books of the morning or talk of the evening: and any letters from you, my dearest, will be welcome to

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCCXII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

London, July 8, 1783.

TIME makes great changes of opinion. * * * * ran perpetually after ——— in the lifetime of that lady, to whom he so earnestly desired to be reunited in the grave. I am glad ——— is not left in poverty, her disease seems to threaten her with a full share of misery.

Of Miss H——, whom you charge me with forgetting, I know not why I should much foster the remembrance, for I can do her no good; but I honestly recommend her to your pity; for nothing but the opportunity of emptying her bosom with confidence can save her from madness. To know at least one mind so disordered is not without its use; it shows the danger of admitting passively the first irruption of irregular imaginations.

Langton and I have talked of passing a little time at Rochester together, till neither knows well how

to refuse, though I think he is not eager to take me, and I am not desirous to be taken. His family is numerous, and his house little. I have let him know, for his relief, that I do not mean to burden him more than a week. He is however among those who wish me well, and would exert what power he has to do me good.

I think you will do well in going to Weymouth, for though it be nothing, it is, at least to the young ones, a new nothing, and they will be able always to tell that they have seen Weymouth. I am for the present willing enough to persuade myself, that a short succession of trifles may contribute to my re-establishment, but hope to return, for it is surely time, to something of importance.

I am, dear Madam,

Your, &c.



L E T T E R C C C X I I I .

To M r s . T H R A L E .

DEAR MADAM,

London, July 23, 1783.

I HAVE been thirteen days at Rochester, and am just now returned. I came back by water in a common boat twenty miles for a shilling, and when I landed at Billingsgate I carried my budget myself to Cornhill before I could get a coach, and was not much incommoded.

I have

I have had Miss Sufy's and Miss Sophy's letters, and now I am come home can write and write. While I was with Mr. Langton we took four little journies in a chaise, and made one little voyage on the Medway, with four misses and their maid, but they were very quiet.

I am very well, except that my voice soon faulders, and I have not slept well, which I imputed to the heat, which has been such as I never felt before for so long time. Three days we had of very great heat about ten years ago. I infer nothing from it but a good harvest.

Whether this short rustication has done me any good I cannot tell, I certainly am not worse, and am very willing to think myself better. Are you better? Sophy gave but a poor account of you. Do not let your mind wear out your body.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCCXIV.

To Miss SOPHIA THRALE.

DEAREST MISS SOPHY, London, July 24, 1783.

BY an absence from home, and for one reason and another, I owe a great number of letters, and I assure you that I sit down to write yours first. Why you should think yourself not a favourite, I cannot

cannot guess; my favour will, I am afraid, never be worth much; but be its value more or less, you are never likely to lose it, and less likely if you continue your studies with the same diligence as you have begun them.

Your proficiencie in arithmetick is not only to be commended, but admired. Your master does not, I suppose, come very often, nor stay very long; yet your advance in the science of numbers is greater than is commonly made by those who, for so many weeks as you have been learning, spend six hours a day in the writing school.

Never think, my Sweet, that you have arithmetick enough; when you have exhausted your master, buy books. Nothing amuses more harmlessly than computation, and nothing is oftener applicable to real business or speculative enquiries. A thousand stories which the ignorant tell, and believe, die away at once, when the computist takes them in his gripe. I hope you will cultivate in yourself a disposition to numerical enquiries; they will give you entertainment in solitude by the practice, and reputation in publick by the effect.

If you can borrow *Wilkins's Real Character*, a folio which the bookseller can perhaps let you have, you will have a very curious calculation, which you are qualified to consider, to shew that Noah's ark was capable of holding all the known animals of the world, with provision for all the time in which the earth was under water. Let me hear from you soon again.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER

LETTER CCCXV.

To Miss SUSANNA THRALE.

DEAR MISS SUSAN,

London, July 26, 1783.

I ANSWER your letter last, because it was received last; and when I have answered it, I am out of debt to your house. A short negligence throws one behind hand. This maxim, if you consider and improve it, will be equivalent to your parson and bird, which is however a very good story, as it shews how far gluttony may proceed, which where it prevails is I think more violent, and certainly more despicable, than avarice itself.

Gluttony is, I think, less common among women than among men. Women commonly eat more sparingly, and are less curious in the choice of meat; but if once you find a woman gluttonous, expect from her very little virtue. Her mind is enslaved to the lowest and grossest temptation.

A friend of mine, who courted a lady of whom he did not know much, was advised to see her eat, and if she was voluptuous at table, to forsake her. He married her however, and in a few weeks came to his adviser with this exclamation, "it is the disturbance of my life to see this woman eat." She was, as might be expected, selfish and brutal, and after some years of discord they parted, and I believe came together no more.

Of men, the examples are sufficiently common. I had a friend, of great eminence in the learned and the witty world, who had hung up some pots on his wall to furnish nests for sparrows. The poor

sparrows, not knowing his character, were seduced by the convenience, and I never heard any man speak of any future enjoyment with such contortions of delight as he exhibited, when he talked of eating the young ones.

When you do me the favour to write again, tell me something of your studies, your work, or your amusements.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R C C C X V I .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

DEAR MADAM,

London, August 13, 1783.

YOUR letter was brought just as I was complaining that you had forgotten me.

I am glad that the ladies find so much novelty at Weymouth. Ovid says, that the sun is undelightfully uniform. They had some expectation of shells, which both by their form and colour have a claim to human curiosity. Of all the wonders, I have had no account, except that Miss Thrale seems pleased with your little voyages.

Sophy mentioned a story which her sisters would not suffer her to tell, because they would tell it themselves, but it has never yet been told me.

Mrs.

Mrs. Ing is, I think, a baronet's daughter, of an ancient house in Staffordshire. Of her husband's father, mention is made in the life of Ambrose Philips.

Of this world, in which you represent me as delighting to live, I can say little. Since I came home I have only been to church, once to Burney's, once to Paradise's, and once to Reynolds's. With Burney I saw Dr. Rose, his new relation, with whom I have been many years acquainted. If I discovered no reliques of disease I am glad, but Fanny's trade is fiction.

I have since partaken of an epidemical disorder, but common evils produce no dejection.

Paradise's company, I fancy, disappointed him; I remember nobody. With Reynolds was the * * * * * of * * * *, a man coarse of voice and inelegant of language.

I am now broken with disease, without the alleviation of familiar friendship or domestick society; I have no middle state between clamour and silence, between general conversation and self-tormenting solitude. Levet is dead, and poor Williams is making haste to die: I know not if she will ever more come out of her chamber.

I am now quite alone, but let me turn my thoughts another way.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER

LETTER CCCXVII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

MADAM,

London, August 20, 1783.

THIS has been a day of great emotion; the office of the Communion of the Sick has been performed in poor Mrs. Williams's chamber. She was too weak to rise from her bed, and is therefore to be supposed unlikely to live much longer. She has, I hope, little violent pain, but is wearing out by torpid inappetence and wearisome decay; but all the powers of her mind are in their full vigour, and when she has spirits enough for conversation, she possesses all the intellectual excellence that she ever had. Surely this is an instance of mercy much to be desired by a parting soul.

At home I see almost all my companions dead or dying. At Oxford I have just left Wheeler, the man with whom I most delighted to converse. The sense of my own diseases, and the sight of the world sinking round me, oppress me perhaps too much. I hope that all these admonitions will not be vain, and that I shall learn to die as dear Williams is dying, who was very cheerful before and after this awful solemnity, and seems to resign herself with calmness and hope upon eternal mercy.

I read your last kind letter with great delight; but when I came to *love* and *honour*, what sprung in my mind?—How loved, how honoured once, avails thee not.

I fat

I sat to Mrs. Reynolds yesterday for my picture, perhaps the tenth time, and I sat near three hours with the patience of *mortal born to bear*; at last she declared it quite finished, and seems to think it fine. I told her it was *Johnson's grimly ghost*. It is to be engraved, and I think *in glided*, &c. will be a good inscription.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCCXVIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

London, August 26, 1783.

THINGS stand with me much as they have done for some time. Mrs Williams fancies now and then that she grows better, but her vital powers appear to be slowly burning out. Nobody thinks however that she will very soon be quite wasted, and as she suffers me to be of very little use to her, I have determined to pass some time with Mr. Bowles near Salisbury, and have taken a place for Thursday.

Some benefit may be perhaps received from change of air, some from change of company, and some from mere change of place. It is not easy to grow well in a chamber where one has long been sick, and where every thing seen and every person

person speaking revives and impresses images of pain. Though it be that no man can run away from himself, he may yet escape from many causes of useless uneasiness. That the *mind is its own place*, is the boast of a fallen angel that had learned to lie. External locality has great effects, at least upon all embodied beings. I hope this little journey will afford me at least some suspense of melancholy.

You give but an unpleasing account of your performance at Portland. Your scrambling days are then over. I remember when no Miss and few Masters could have left you behind, or *thrown you out in the pursuit of honour or of curiosity*. But *tempus edax rerum*, and no way has been yet found to draw his teeth.

I am, dear Madam,

Your, &c.



L E T T E R CCCXIX.

Mrs. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

MY DEAR SIR,

Weymouth, August 30, 1783.

I HAD your letter, and am very desirous that change of place may do more for my friend than it has done for myself; yet I am really a little better too, or at least ill in *another way*, which makes it nothing more.—*Variety of wretchedness*: my face
is

is at this time covered over with a frightful erysipelas. The Portland expedition did not end creditably to my corporeal powers, which are grown very weak indeed; and when I felt myself on the precipice unable to go forward or backward, without that help which I could only obtain from a clown upon the hill, my mind was in no good humour neither, and if I had thought on Mrs. Williams at all I should have thought her happier than myself, for she has one companion who wishes her long life, and surely that is one very comfortable thing.

The sea here at Weymouth is not half as fine as our old sea on the Suffex coast, and a marine prospect is at best a dull one after the first week: the seasons have no effect on it; and when one has once seen it rough and once seen it smooth, all is over; while every hour of every day produces some change upon a land view, and excites new images in any mind not totally crushed down or exhausted. The look from my window is mighty pretty however, and exhibits so tranquil a scene as it is difficult for old Ocean to display. I can imagine it like the Lake of Geneva, so blue, so still, so elegantly serpentized as if Mr. Brown had *laid it out*. In short, this is no *Phœnician* Neptune, whose beard is said to be longer than the others, because that place produced the earliest navigators: this shall be an *Otabeite* Neptune, and we will strike a medal of him all shaven and shorn, to shew that no canoe even of the Society Islands need fear him, though ignorant of the art of sailing till the world was got into its *dotage*, as Goldsmith said, when he made the sharper talk about cosmogony. This nonsense came into my head as I saw a sailor on horseback this morning, and began thinking what could inspire the ancients to make Neptune the creator of a horse, for if any thing was ever
foreign

foreign from the purpose, *that* was foreign, or the man that rode under my window to-day had grievously degenerated.—So as you say, my dear Sir, change of place does one *some* good, by giving one some new thing to think on though but for a moment. I advised our Miss H—— to the same remedy, but have a notion her mind is haunted by one particular image; if so, nothing will cure her; for if the heart be broken 'tis broken like a looking-glass, and the smallest piece will for ever preserve and reflect the same figure till 'tis again ground down into a new mass.

I told you who were our companions, and told you how well I liked them, but at Bath I have those who best *can lengthen* and most *can gladden life*. To one who is never well, and often extremely ill indeed, a place like this, destitute of medical help, keeps the mind in a state of apprehension almost equal to disease, and if any of the girls should be taken bad here (as Sophia seems now half inclinable) what would become of,

DEAR SIR,

Your faithful servant,

H. L. THRALE.

I will go home now very soon, for I am miserably lean, so thin indeed that you would hardly know me; but flashy mortals waste with concentrated misery like the diamond in your burning-glass: patience more perfect and excellence more complete would come out from the trial undiminished like the pure gold:—but such virtue must be long prayed for and late obtained.

L E T T E R CCCXX.

To Miss SUSANNA THRALE.

DEAR MISS,

September 9, 1783.

I AM glad that you and your sisters have been at Portland. You now can tell what is a quarry and what is a cliff. Take all opportunities of filling your mind with genuine scenes of nature: description is always fallacious, at least till you have seen realities you cannot know it to be true. This observation might be extended to life, but life cannot be surveyed with the same safety as nature, and it is better to know vice and folly by report than by experience. A painter, says Sydney, mingled in the battle that he might know how to paint it; but his knowledge was useless, for some mischievous sword took away his head. They whose speculation upon characters leads them too far into the world, may lose that nice sense of good and evil by which characters are to be tried. Acquaint yourself therefore both with the pleasing and the terrible parts of nature, but in life wish to know only the good.

Pray shew Mamma this passage of a letter from Dr. Brocklesby: “ Mrs. Williams, from mere in-
“ anition, has at length paid the great debt to
“ nature, about three o’clock this morning, (Sept.
“ 6.) She died without a struggle, retaining her
“ faculties entire to the very last, and as she ex-
“ pressed it, having set her house in order, was
“ prepared to leave it at the last summons of
“ nature.”

I do not now say any thing more than that I am,

My dearest, Your, &c.

L E T T E R

L E T T E R CCCXXI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

London, Sept. 22, 1783.

HAPPY are you that have ease and leisure to want intelligence of air ballons. Their existence is I believe indubitable; but I know not that they can possibly be of any use. The construction is this. The chymical philosophers have discovered a body (which I have forgotten, but will enquire) which, dissolved by an acid, emits a vapour lighter than the atmospherical air. This vapour is caught, among other means, by tying a bladder, compressed upon the bottle in which the dissolution is performed; the vapour rising swells the bladder, and fills it. The bladder is then tied and removed, and another applied, till as much of this light air is collected as is wanted. Then a large spherical case is made, and very large it must be, of the lightest matter that can be found, secured by some method, like that of oiling silk, against all passage of air. Into this are emptied all the bladders of light air, and if there is light air enough it mounts into the clouds upon the same principle as a bottle filled with water will sink in water, but a bottle filled with æther would float. It rises till it comes to air of equal tenuity with its own, if wind or water does not spoil it on the way. Such, Madam, is an air balloon.

Meteors have been this autumn very often seen, but I have never been in their way.

Poor

Poor Williams has I hope seen the end of her afflictions. She acted with prudence and she bore with fortitude. She has left me.

Thou thy weary task hast done,
Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages.

Had she had good humour and prompt elocution, her universal curiosity and comprehensive knowledge would have made her the delight of all that knew her. She left her little to your charity school.

The complaint about which you enquire is a farcocele: I thought it a hydrocele, and heeded it but little. Puncture has detected the mistake: it can be safely suffered no longer. Upon inspection three days ago it was determined *extrema ventura*. If excision should be delayed there is danger of a gangrene. You would not have me for fear of pain perish in putrescence. I shall I hope, with trust in eternal mercy, lay hold of the possibility of life which yet remains. My health is not bad; the gout is now trying at my feet. My appetite and digestion are good, and my sleep better than formerly: I am not dejected, and I am not feeble. There is however danger enough in such operations at seventy-four.

Let me have your prayers and those of the young dear people.

I am, dear Madam,

Your, &c.

Write soon and often.

L E T T E R CCCXXII.

To Mrs. . . . T H R A L E.

MADAM,

London, Oct. 6, 1783.

W H E N I shall give a good and settled account of my health I cannot venture to say; some account I am ready to give, because I am pleased to find that you desire it.

I yet sit without shoes, with my foot upon a pillow, but my pain and weakness are much abated, and I am no longer crawling upon two sticks. To the gout my mind is reconciled by another letter from Mr. Mudge, in which he vehemently urges the excision, and tells me that the gout will secure me from every thing paralytick: if this be true, I am ready to say to the arthritick pains, *Deh! venite ogne di, durate un anno.*

My physician in ordinary is Dr. Brocklesby, who comes almost every day; my surgeon in Mr. Pott's absence is Mr. Cruikshank, the present reader in Dr. Hunter's school. Neither of them however do much more than look and talk. The general health of my body is as good as you have ever known it, almost as good as I can remember.

The carriage which you supposed made rough by my weakness was the common Salisbury stage, high hung, and driven to Salisbury in a day. I was not fatigued.

Mr. Pott has been out of town, but I expect to see him soon, and will then tell you something of the

the main affair, of which there seems now to be a better prospect.

This afternoon I have given to Mrs. Cholmondeley, Mrs. Way, Lady Sheffield's relation, Mr. Kindersley the describer of Indian manners, and another anonymous lady.

As Mrs. Williams received a pension from Mrs. Montagu, it was fit to notify her death. The account has brought me a letter not only civil but tender; so I hope peace is proclaimed.

The state of the Stocks I take to be this: When in the late exigencies the ministry gave so high a price for money, all the money that could be disengaged from trade was lent to the publick. The stocks sunk because nobody bought them. They have not risen since, because the money being already lent out, nobody has money to lay out upon them till commerce shall by the help of peace bring a new supply. If they cannot rise, they will sometimes fall; for their essence seems to be fluctuation; but the present sudden fall is occasioned by the report of some new disturbances and demands which the Irish are machinating.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCCXXIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

London, October 9, 1783.

TWO nights ago Mr. Burke sat with me a long time; he seems much pleased with his journey. We had both seen Stonehenge this summer for the first time. I told him that the view had enabled me to confute two opinions which have been advanced about it. One, that the materials are not natural stones, but an artificial composition hardened by time. This notion is as old as Camden's time; and has this strong argument to support it, that stone of that species is no where to be found. The other opinion, advanced by Dr. Charlton, is, that it was erected by the Danes.

Mr. Bowles made me observe, that the transverse stones were fixed on the perpendicular supporters by a knob formed on the top of the upright stone, which entered into a hollow cut in the crossing stone. This is a proof that the enormous edifice was raised by a people who had not yet the knowledge of mortar; which cannot be supposed of the Danes who came hither in ships, and were not ignorant certainly of the arts of life. This proves likewise the stones not to be factitious; for they that could mould such durable masses could do much more than make mortar, and could have continued the transverse from the upright part with the same paste.

You have doubtless seen Stonehenge, and if you have not, I should think it a hard task to make an adequate description.

It

It is, in my opinion, to be referred to the earliest habitation of the Island, as a Druidical monument of at least two thousand years; probably the most ancient work of man upon the Island. Salisbury cathedral and its neighbour Stonehenge, are two eminent monuments of art and rudeness, and may shew the first essay, and the last perfection, in architecture.

I have not yet settled my thoughts about the generation of light air, which I indeed once saw produced, but I was at the height of my great complaint. I have made enquiry, and shall soon be able to tell you how to fill a ballon.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCCXXIV.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

London, October 21, 1783.

I HAVE formerly heard, what you perhaps have heard too, that—

The wheel of life is daily turning round,
And nothing in this world of certainty is found.

When in your letter of the eleventh, you told me that my two letters had obliged, consoled, and
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delighted you, I was much elevated, and longed for a larger answer; but when the answer of the nineteenth came, I found that the obliging, consolatory, and delightful paragraphs had made so little impression, that you want again to be told what those papers were written to tell you, and of what I can now tell you nothing new. I am as I was; with no pain and little inconvenience from the great complaint, and feeling nothing from the gout but a little tenderness and weakness.

Physiognomy, as it is a Greek word, ought to found the G; but the French and Italians, I think, spell it without the G; and from them perhaps we learned to pronounce it. G, I think, is founded in formal, and sunk in familiar language.

Mr. Pott was with me this morning, and still continues his disinclination to *fire and sword*. The operation is therefore still suspended; not without hopes of relief from some easier and more natural way.

Mrs. Porter the tragedian, with whom ——— spent part of his earlier life, was so much the favourite of her time, that she was welcomed on the stage when she trod it by the help of a stick. She taught her pupils no violent graces; for she was a woman of very gentle and ladylike manners, though without much extent of knowledge, or activity of understanding.

You are now retired, and have nothing to impede self-examination or self-improvement. Endeavour to reform that instability of attention which your last letter has happened to betray. Perhaps it is natural for those that have much within to think little on things without; but whoever lives heedlessly lives but in a mist, perpetually deceived by false appearances of the past, without any certain reliance on recollection. Per-

haps

haps this begins to be my state; but I have not done my part very sluggishly, if it now begins.

The hour of solitude is now come, and Williams is gone. But I am not, I hope, improperly dejected. A little I read, and a little I think.

I am, &c.

LETTER CCCXXV.

To Mrs. THRALE.

MADAM, London, October 27, 1783.

YOU may be very reasonably weary of sickness; it is neither pleasant to talk nor to hear of it. I hope soon to lose the disgusting topick; for I have now neither pain nor sickness. My ancles are weak, and my feet tender. I have not tried to walk much above a hundred yards, and was glad to come back upon wheels. The Doctor and Mr. Metcalf have taken me out. I sleep uncertainly and unseasonably. This is the sum of my complaint. I have not been so well for two years past. The great malady is neither heard, seen, felt, nor—understood. But I am very solitary.

Semperque relinqui
Sola sibi, semper longam incommitata videtur
Ire viam.

But I have begun to look among my books, and hope that I am all, whatever that was, which I have ever been.

Mrs. Siddons in her visit to me behaved with great modesty and propriety, and left nothing behind her to be censured or despised. Neither praise nor money, the two powerful corrupters of mankind, seem to have depraved her. I shall be glad to see her again. Her brother Kemble calls on me, and pleases me very well. Mrs. Siddons and I talked of plays; and she told me her intention of exhibiting this winter the characters of *Constance*, *Catherine*, and *Isabella* in Shakespeare.

I have had this day a letter from Mr. Mudge; who, with all his earnestness for operation, thinks it better to wait the effects of time, and, as he says, to let well alone. To this the patient naturally inclines, though I am afraid of having the knife yet to endure when I can bear it less. Cruikshank was even now in doubt of the event; but Pott, though never eager, had, or discovered, less fear.

If I was a little cross, would it not have made patient Grisel cross, to find that you had forgotten the letter that you were answering? But what did I care, if I did not love you? You need not fear that another should get my kindness from you; that kindness which you could not throw away if you tried, you surely cannot lose while you desire to keep it.

I am,

Madam, Your, &c.

I have

I have a letter signed S. A. Thrale; I take S. A. to be Miss Sophy: but who is bound to recollect initials? A name should be written, if not fully, yet so that it cannot be mistaken.



LETTER CCCXXVI.

To Mrs. THRALE.

MADAM,

London, Nov. 1, 1783.

YOU will naturally wish to know what was done by the robbers at the brewhouse. They climbed by the help of the lamp iron to the covering of the door, and there opening the window, which was never fastened, entered and went down to the parlour, and took the plate off the sideboard; but being in haste, and probably without light, they did not take it all. They then unlocked the street-door, and locking it again, carried away the key. The whole loss, as Mr. Perkins told me, amounts to near fifty pounds.

Mr. Pott bade me this day take no more care about the tumour. The gout too is almost well in spite of all the luxury to which my friends have tempted me by a succession of pheasants, partridges, and other delicacies. But Nature has got the better. I hope to walk to church to-morrow.

An

An air ballon has been lately procured by our virtuosi, but it performed very little to their expectation.

The air with which these balls are filled, is procured by dissolving filings in the vitriolick (or I suppose sulphureous) acid; but the smoke of burnt straw may be used, though its levity is not so great.

If a case could be found at once light and strong, a man might mount with his will, and go whither the winds would carry him. The case of the ball which came hither was of goldbeaters skin. The cases which have hitherto been used are apparently defective, for the ball came to the ground; which they could never do, unless there were some breach made.

How old is the boy that likes the Rambler better than apples and pears?

I shall be glad of Miss Sophy's letter, and will soon write to S. A.; who, since she is not Sophy, must be Sufy. Methinks it is long since I heard from Queeney.

I am, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R CCCXXVII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

London, Nov. 13, 1783.

SINCE you have written to me with the attention and tenderness of ancient time, your letters give me a great part of the pleasure which a life of solitude admits. You will never bestow any share of your good will on one who deserves better. Those that have loved longest love best. A sudden blaze of kindness may by a single blast of coldness be extinguished, but that fondness which length of time has connected with many circumstances and occasions, though it may for a while be suppressed by disgust or resentment, with or without a cause, is hourly revived by accidental recollection. To those that have lived long together, every thing heard and every thing seen, recalls some pleasure communicated, or some benefit conferred, some petty quarrel, or some slight endearment. Esteem of great powers, or amiable qualities newly discovered, may embroider a day or a week, but a friendship of twenty years is interwoven with the texture of life. A friend may be often found and lost, but an *old friend* never can be found, and Nature has provided that he cannot easily be lost. ..

I have

I have not forgotten the Davenants, though they seem to have forgotten me. I began very early to tell them what they have commonly found to be true. I am sorry to hear of their building. I have always warned those whom I loved, against that mode of ostentatious waste.

You seem to mention Lord Kilmurrey as a stranger. We were at his house in Cheshire; and he one day dined with Sir Lynch. What he tells of the epigram is not true, but perhaps he does not know it to be false. Do not you remember how he rejoiced in having *no* park? He could not disoblige his neighbours by sending them *no* venison.

The frequency of death, to those who look upon it in the leisure of Arcadia, is very dreadful. We all know what it should teach us; let us all be diligent to learn. Lucy Porter has lost her brother. But whom I have lost—let me not now remember. Let not your loss be added to the mournful catalogue. Write soon again to

Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R

L E T T E R CCCXXVIII.

To Miss S. A. T H R A L E.

DEAR MISS,

Nov. 18, 1783.

HERE is a whole week, and nothing heard from your house. Baretti said what a wicked house it would be, and a wicked house it is. Of you however I have no complaint to make, for I owe you a letter. Still I live here by my own self, and have had of late very bad nights; but then I have had a pig to dinner, which Mr. Perkins gave me. Thus life is chequered.

I cannot tell you much news, because I see nobody that you know. Do you read the Tatlers? They are part of the books which every body should read, because they are the sources of conversation, therefore make them part of your library. Bickerstaff, in the Tatler, gives as a specimen of familiar letters, an account of his cat. I could tell you as good things of Lily the white kitling, who is now at full growth, and very well behaved; but I do not see why we should descend below human beings, and of one human being I can tell something that you will like to hear.

A friend, whose name I will tell when your Mamma has tried to guess it, sent to my physician to enquire whether this long train of illness had brought me into any difficulties for want of money, with an invitation to send to him for what occasion required. I shall write this night to thank him, having no need to borrow.

I have

I have seen Mr. Seward since his return only once; he gave no florid account of my Mistress's health. Tell her that I hearken every day after a letter from her, and do not be long before you write yourself to,

My dear,

Your, &c.



L E T T E R C C C X X I X .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

DEAR MADAM,

London, Nov. 20, 1783.

I BEGAN to grieve and wonder that I had no letter, but not being much accustomed to fetch in evil by circumspection or anticipation, did not suspect that the omission had so dreadful a cause as the sickness of one of my dears. As her physician thought so well of her when you wrote, I hope she is now out of danger. You do not tell me her disease; and perhaps have not been able yourself fully to understand it. I hope it is not of the cephalick race.

That frigid stillness with which my pretty Sophy melts away, exhibits a temper very incommodious in sickness, and by no means amiable in the tenour of life. Incommunicative taciturnity neither imparts nor invites friendship, but reposes
on

on a stubborn sufficiency self-centered, and neglects the interchange of that social officiousness by which we are habitually endeared to one another. They that mean to make no use of friends, will be at little trouble to gain them; and to be without friendship, is to be without one of the first comforts of our present state. To have no assistance from other minds, in resolving doubts, in appeasing scruples, in balancing deliberations, is a very wretched destitution. If therefore my loves have this silence by temper, do not let them have it by principle; shew them that it is a perverse and inordinate disposition, which must be counteracted and reformed. Have I said enough?

Poor Doctor Taylor represents himself as ill; and I am afraid is worse than in the summer. My nights are very bad; but of the farcocele I have now little but the memory.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER

LETTER CCCXXX.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

London, Nov. 24, 1783.

THE post came in late to-day, and I had lost hopes. If the distress of my dear little girl keep me anxious, I have much consolation from the maternal and domestick character of your dear letters.

I do not much fear her pretty life, because scarcely any body dies of her disorder; but it is an unpromising entry upon a new period of life: and there is, I suspect, danger lest she should have to struggle for some years with a tender, irritable, and as it is not very properly called, a nervous constitution. But we will hope better; and please ourselves with thinking that nature or physick, will gain a complete victory; that dear Sophy will quite recover, and that she and her sister will love one another one degree more for having felt and excited pity, for having wanted and given help.

I received yesterday from your physicians a note, from which I received no information; they put their heads together to tell me nothing. Be pleased to write punctually yourself, and leave them to their trade. Let me have something every post till my dear Sophy is better.

My nights are often very troublesome, so that I try to sleep in the day. The old convulsions of the chest have a mind to fasten their fangs again upon me. I am afraid that winter will pinch me. But I will struggle with it, and hope to hold out yet against heat and cold.

I am, Madam, your, &c.

LETTER

LETTER CCCXXI.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

London, Nov. 27, 1783.

I HAD to-day another trifling letter from the physicians. Do not let them fill your mind with terrours which perhaps they have not in their own; neither suffer yourself to sit forming comparisons between Sophy and her dear father; between whom there can be no other resemblance, than that of sickness to sickness. Hystericks and apoplexies have no relation. Hystericks commonly cease at the times when apoplexies attack; and very rarely can be said to shorten life. They are the bugbears of disease, of great terrour but little danger.

Mrs. Byron has been with me to-day to enquire after Sophy; I sent her away free from the anxiety which she brought with her.

Do however what the Doctors order; they know well enough what is to be done. My pretty Sophy will be well; and Bath will ring with the great cure.

I am, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R CCCXXXII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM.

London, Nov. 29, 1783.

THE life of my dear, sweet, pretty, lovely; delicious Miss Sophy is safe; let us return thanks to the great Giver of Existence, and pray that her continuance amongst us may be a blessing to herself and to those that love her. *Multos et felices*, my dear girl.

Now she is recovered, she must write me a little history of her sufferings, and impart her schemes of study and improvement. Life, to be worthy of a rational being, must be always in progression; we must always purpose to do more or better than in time past. The mind is enlarged and elevated by mere purposes, though they end as they begin by airy contemplation. We compare and judge, though we do not practise.

She will go back to her arithmetick again; a science which will always delight her more, as by advancing further she discerns more of its use, and a science suited to Sophy's ease of mind; for you told in the last winter that she loved metaphysics more than romances. Her choice is certainly as laudable as it is uncommon; but I would have her like what is good in both.

God bless you and your children; so says,

Dear Madam,

Your old Friend.

L E T T E R

L E T T E R CCCXXXIII.

Mrs. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

Nov. 31, 1783.

I AM very ill indeed, my dear Sir, but our pretty Sophy being now so *near* at least to recovery my fingers are grown more steady, and I will endeavour to write without agitation once again. She has had a severe illness; so severe, that few men however wise or strong would have endured it with greater resolution. The fullen courage you speak of in the letter dated twenty is certainly not pleasing; but the more one lives on to see softness seduced, flexibility despised, and gentleness insulted, the more contentedly one bears with a disposition so different from one's own. There is a good deal of body too in all this; a good deal of this temper I mean seems connected with corporeal causes, and cephalick disorders seem to haunt people of that turn more than others; who though they may be tortured by various maladies, are seldom afflicted with those dreadful head-achs that enchain the faculties, as if by magick, and render complaint nearly as difficult as recovery. Sophia will return to her study of arithmetick in proper time; it appears to me a study well suited to one who has a distaste of fiction because it resembles falsehood. If truth can be found in any sublunary science, numbers will produce it, for to that at last almost all other sciences refer for confirmation.

Were

Were the mother as likely to enjoy life and health again as the daughter is, she would perhaps struggle to obtain the advantage of Mr. Herschel's acquaintance. This famous astronomer, whose discoveries, or whose hope of future discoveries begin to fill the mouths of our Bath talkers, and I fancy my friend Mrs. Lewis could introduce me, though God knows she as well as myself have nearer concerns to puzzle about than lunar ones; and indeed when I think upon the desperate state of oblivion into which are fallen the wonders promised by Helvetius, and that *selenography* which I believe procured him a pension too from Lewis the Fourteenth, my heart recoils at the name of astronomical discoveries, and trembles lest the star of King George should in some future age be consigned to keep company with the firmament of John Sobieski. In the mean time who can help smiling at the expressions used by Derham, Ray, and others, who write on these subjects, and fancy they are exalting the glory of God when they tell us, in what a *workman-like* manner he has made the world, &c.? You hate all notion of national character I know, yet 'tis difficult to deny that none but a *true Briton* could think in such a manner when praising his Creator; as it is impossible not to discern the Frenchman in Archbishop Fenelon's latter conversations when he says, *Si j'aurai l'honneur de voir Dieu je ne manquerai guères de lui recommander bien l'ame du Roi de France*. I have not his life with me here, but have a notion those are the very words,

You will not suspect me of wanting respect for these worthies: what christian lives who can refuse his reverence to Cambray's piety or Derham's learning? but you will have me write, and I am miserably ill, very peevish, and very perverse, and 'twere better you quarrelled with me about
 I
 departed

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 241

departed philosophers, than that you accused me of wanting good-will towards you, of whom no person living can think more highly than does,

Dear Sir,

Your faithful humble Servant,

H. L. THRALE.

The Girls will write soon and tell you all our conjectures.



L E T T E R CCCXXXIV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

London, Dec. 13, 1783.

I THINK it long since I wrote, and sometimes venture to hope that you think it long too. The intermission has been filled with spasms, opiates, sleepless nights, and heavy days. These vellications of my breast shorten my breath; whether they will much shorten my life I know not, but I have been for some time past very comfortless. My friends here ever continue kind, and much notice is taken of me.

I had two pretty letters from Susy and Sophy, to which I will send answers, for they are two dear girls. You must all guess again at my friend.

VOL. II.

R

I dined

I dined about a fortnight ago with three old friends; we had not met together for thirty years, and one of us thought the other grown very old. In the thirty years two of our set have died: our meeting may be supposed to be somewhat tender. I boasted that I had passed the day with three friends, and that no mention had been made among any of us of the air ballon, which has taken full possession, with a very good claim, of every philosophical mind and mouth. Do you not wish for the flying coach?

Take care of your own health, compose your mind, and you have yet strength of body to be well.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCCXXXV.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

London, Dec. 27, 1783.

THE wearisome solitude of the long evenings did indeed suggest to me the convenience of a club in my neighbourhood, but I have been hindered from attending it by want of breath. If I can complete the scheme, you shall have the names and the regulations.

LETTER CCCXXXVI.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

London, Dec. 31, 1783.

SINCE you cannot guess, I will tell you that the generous man was Gerard Hamilton. I returned him a very thankful and respectful letter.

Your enquiry about Lady Carlisle I cannot answer, for I never saw her, unless perhaps without knowing her at a conversation.

Sir Joshua has just been here, and knows nothing of Miss Bingham; if one of Lord Lucan's daughters be meant, the eldest is now Lady Spencer; she is languishing in France with a diseased leg, and the third is a child.

Pray send the letter which you think will divert me, for I have much need of entertainment; spiritless, infirm, sleepless and solitary, looking back with sorrow and forward with terror:—but I will stop.

Barry of Ireland had a notion that a man's pulse wore him out; my beating breast wears out me. The physicians yesterday covered it with a blister, of which the effect cannot yet be known. Good God, prosper their endeavours! Heberden is of opinion that while the weather is oppressive we must palliate.

In the mean time I am well fed; I have now in the house pheasant, venison, turkey and ham, all unbought. Attention and respect give pleasure, however late or however useless. But they are not useless when they are late; it is reasonable to rejoice,

rejoice, as the day declines, to find that it has been spent with the approbation of mankind.

The ministry is again broken, and to any man who extends his thoughts to national consideration the times are dismal and gloomy. But to a sick man what is the publick?

The new year is at hand; may God make it happy to me, to you, to us all, for Jesus Christ's sake! Amen.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.



L E T T E R. CCCXXXVII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

London, Jan. 12, 1784.

IF, as you observe, my former letter was written with trepidation, there is little reason, except the habit of enduring, why this should shew more steadiness. I am confined to the house; I do not know that any things grow better; my physicians direct me to combat the hard weather with opium; I cannot well support its turbulence, and yet cannot forbear it, for its immediate effect is ease; having kept me waking all the night it forces sleep upon me in the day, and recompenses a night of tediousness

tediousness with a day of uselessness. My legs and my thighs grow very tumid : in the mean time my appetite is good, and if my physicians do not flatter me death is rushing upon me. But this is in the hand of God.

The first talk of the sick is commonly of themselves ; but if they talk of nothing else, they cannot complain, if they are soon left without an audience.

You observe, Madam, that the ballon engages all mankind, and it is indeed a wonderful and unexpected addition to human knowledge ; but we have a daring projector, who, disdaining the help of fumes and vapours, is making better than Dædalean wings, with which he will master the ballon and its companions as an eagle masters a goose. It is very seriously true that a subscription of eight hundred pounds has been raised for the wire and workmanship of iron wings ; one pair of which, and I think a tail, are now shewn in the Haymarket, and they are making another pair at Birmingham. The whole is said to weigh two hundred pounds—no specious preparation for flying, but there are those who expect to see him in the sky. When I can leave the house I will tell you more.

I had the same old friends to dine with me on Wednesday, and may say that since I lost sight of you I have had one pleasant day.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

Pray send me a direction to Sir ——— Musgrave
in Ireland.

L E T T E R

L E T T E R CCCXXXVIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

London, Jan. 21, 1784.

DR. Heberden this day favoured me with a visit; and after hearing what I had to tell him of miseries and pains, and comparing my present with my past state, declared me well. That his opinion is erroneous, I know with too much certainty; and yet was glad to hear it, as it set extremities at a greater distance: he who is by his physician thought well, is at least not thought in immediate danger. They therefore whose attention to me makes them talk of my health, will, I hope, soon not drop, but lose their subject. But alas! I had no sleep last night, and sit now panting over my paper. *Dabit Deus his quoque finem.* I have really hope from spring; and am ready, like Almanzor, to bid the sun *fly swiftly*, and *leave weeks and months behind him*. The sun has looked for six thousand years upon the world to little purpose, if he does not know that a sick man is almost as impatient as a lover.

Mr. Cator gives such an account of Miss Cecy, as you and all of us must delight to hear; Cator has a rough, manly, independent understanding, and does not spoil it by complaisance; he never speaks merely to please, and seldom is mistaken in things which he has any right to know. I think well of her for pleasing him, and of him for being pleased; and at the close, am delighted to find him delighted with her excellence. Let your children,

children, dear Madam, be *his* care, and *your* pleasure; close your thoughts upon them, and when sad fancies are excluded, health and peace will return together.

I am, dear Madam,

Your old Friend.



L E T T E R C C C X X X I X .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

DEAR MADAM,

London, Feb. 9, 1784.

THE remission of the cold did not continue long enough to afford me much relief. You are, as I perceive, afraid of the opium; I had the same terroure, and admitted its assistance only under the pressure of insupportable distress, as of an auxiliary too powerful and too dangerous. But in this pinching season I cannot live without it; and the quantity which I take is less than it once was.

My physicians flatter me, that the season is a great part of my disease; and that when warm weather restores perspiration, this watery disease will evaporate. I am at least willing to flatter myself.

I have been forced to sit up many nights by an obstinate sleeplessness, which makes the time in bed intolerably tedious, and which continues my drowsiness the following day. Besides, I can
sometimes

sometimes sleep erect, when I cannot close my eyes in a recumbent posture. I have just bespoke a flannel dress, which I can easily slip off and on, as I go into bed or get out of it. Thus pass my days and nights in morbid wakefulness, in unreasonable sleepiness, in gloomy solitude, with unwelcome visitors, or ungrateful exclusions, in variety of wretchedness. But I snatch every lucid interval, and animate myself with such amusements as the time offers.

One thing which I have just heard, you will think to surpass expectation. The Chaplain of the factory at Petersburg relates, that the Rambler is now, by the command of the Empress, translating into Russian; and has promised when it is printed to send me a copy.

Grant, O Lord, that all who shall read my pages, may become more obedient to thy laws; and when the wretched writer shall appear before thee, extend thy mercy to him, for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R CCCXL.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

MADAM,

London, March 10, 1784.

YOU know I never thought confidence with respect to futurity any part of the character of a brave, a wise, or a good man. Bravery has no place where it can avail nothing; wisdom impresses strongly the consciousness of those faults, of which it is itself perhaps an aggravation; and goodness, always wishing to be better, and imputing every deficiency to criminal negligence, and every fault to voluntary corruption, never dares to suppose the condition of forgiveness fulfilled, nor what is wanting in the crime supplied by penitence.

This is the state of the best, but what must be the condition of him whose heart will not suffer him to rank himself among the best, or among the good? Such must be his dread of the approaching trial, as will leave him little attention to the opinion of those whom he is leaving for ever; and the serenity that is not felt, it can be no virtue to feign.

The farcocele ran off long ago, at an orifice made for mere experiment.

The water passed naturally, by God's mercy, in a manner of which Dr. Heberden has seen but few examples. The surgeon has been employed to heal some excoriations; and four out of five are no longer under his cure. The physician laid on a blister, and I ordered, by their consent, a salve; but neither succeeded, and neither was very easily healed.

I have

I have been confined from the fourteenth of December, and know not when I shall get out; but I have this day dressed me, as I was dressed in health.

Your kind expressions gave me great pleasure; do not reject me from your thoughts. Shall we ever exchange confidence by the fire-side again?

I hope dear Sophy is better; and intend quickly to pay my debt to Susy.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.



L E T T E R CCCXLI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

London, March 16, 1784.

I AM so near to health, as a month ago I despaired of being. The dropsy is almost wholly run away, and the asthma, unless irritated by cold, seldom attacks me. How I shall bear motion I do not yet know. But though I have little of pain, I am wonderfully weak. My muscles have almost lost all their spring; but I hope that warm weather, when it comes, will restore me. More than three months have I now been confined. But my deliverance has been very extraordinary.

Of

Of one thing very remarkable I will tell you. For the asthma, and perhaps other disorders, my physicians have advised the frequent use of opiates. I resisted them as much as I could; and complained that it made me almost delirious. This Dr. Heberden seemed not much to heed; but I was so weary of it, that I tried, when I could not wholly omit it, to diminish the dose, in which, contrarily to the known custom of the takers of opium, and beyond what it seemed reasonable to expect, I have so far succeeded, that having begun with three grains, a large quantity, I now appease the paroxysm with a quarter of an ounce of diacodium, estimated an equivalent only to half a grain; and this quantity it is now eight days since I took.

That I may send to Mrs. Lewis, for when I shall venture out I do not know, you must let me know where she may be found, which you omitted to tell me.

I hope my dear Sophy will go on recovering. But methinks Miss Thrale rather neglects me; suppose she should try to write me a little Latin letter.

Do you however write to me often, and write kindly; perhaps we may sometime see each other.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R CCCXLII.

To Mrs. T H R A L L E.

MADAM,

London, March 20, 1784.

YOUR last letter had something of tenderness. The accounts which you have had of my danger and distress were I suppose not aggravated. I have been confined ten weeks with an asthma and dropy. But I am now better. God has in his mercy granted me a reprieve; for how much time his mercy must determine.

On the 19th of last month I evacuated twenty pints of water, and I think I reckon exactly; from that time the tumour has subsided, and I now begin to move with some freedom. You will easily believe that I am still at a great distance from health; but I am, as my surgeon expressed it, amazingly better. Heberden seems to have great hopes.

Write to me no more about *dying with a grace*; when you feel what I have felt in approaching eternity—in fear of soon hearing the sentence of which there is no revocation, you will know the folly; my wish is, that you may know it sooner. The distance between the grave and the remotest point of human longevity, is but a very little; and of that little no path is certain. You knew all this, and I thought that I knew it too; but I know it now with a new conviction. May that new conviction not be vain!

I am now cheerful; I hope this approach to recovery is a token of the Divine mercy. My friends

friends continue their kindness. I give a dinner to-morrow.

Pray let me know how my dear Sophy goes on. I still hope that there is in her fits more terrour than danger. But I hope, however it be, that she will speedily recover. I will take care to pay Miss Susy her letter.. God bless you all.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.



LETTER CCCXLIII.

TO MISS SUSY THRALE.

MY DEAREST MISS SUSY, London, Mar. 25, 1784.

SINCE you are resolved to stand it out, and keep *mun* till you have heard from me, I must at last comply; and indeed compliance costs me now no trouble, but as it irritates a cough, which I got, as you might have done, by standing at an open window, and which has now harassed me many days, and is too strong for diacodium, nor has yet given much way to opium itself. However, having been so long used to so many worse things, I mind it but little. I have not bad nights, and my stomach has never failed me. But when I shall go abroad again, I know not.

With Mr. Herschel it will certainly be very right to cultivate an acquaintance; for he can show
you

you in the sky what no man before him has ever seen, by some wonderful improvements which he has made in the telescope. What he has to show is indeed a long way off, and perhaps concerns us but little; but all truth is valuable, and all knowledge is pleasing in its first effects, and may be subsequently useful. Of whatever we see we always wish to know; always congratulate ourselves when we know that of which we perceive another to be ignorant. Take therefore all opportunities of learning that offer themselves, however remote the matter may be from common life or common conversation. Look in Herschel's telescope; go into a chymist's laboratory; if you see a manufacturer at work, remark his operations. By this activity of attention, you will find in every place diversion and improvement.

Now dear Sophy is got well, what is it that ails my mistress? She complains, and complains, I am afraid, with too much cause; but I know not distinctly what is her disorder. I hope that time and a quiet mind will restore her.

I am, My dearest,

Your, &c.

LETTER

LETTER CCCXLIV.

Mrs. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

MY DEAR SIR,

March 27.

YOU tell one of my daughters that you know not with distinctness the cause of my complaints. I believe she who lives with me knows them no better; one very dreadful one is however removed, by dear Sophia's recovery. It is kind in you to quarrel no more about expressions which were not meant to offend; but unjust to suppose, I have not lately thought myself dying. Let us however take the Prince of Abyssinia's advice, *and not add to the other evils of life the bitterness of controversy.* If courage is a noble and generous quality, let us exert it *to the last, and at the last:* If faith is a Christian virtue, let us willingly receive and accept that support it will most surely bestow—and do permit me to repeat those words with which I know not why you were displeased: *Let us leave behind us the best example that we can.*

All this is not written by a person in high health and happiness, but by a fellow-sufferer, who has more to endure than she can tell, or you can guess; and now let us talk of the Severn salmons, which will be coming in soon; I shall send you one of the finest, and shall be glad to hear that your appetite is good: mine has been so long vitiated, that it endures no aliment with pleasure but coffee, and those doses of Peruvian bark or cascarilla which Dobson gives me by turns, and which are become—oddly enough—delightful to my palate.

The

The accounts I hear of P——'s ill state of health help to grieve me; poor man, he battled through great anxiety for two years together at least; and should the ship sink in harbour after weathering so hard a storm, who could help being sorry! All the poet's lives end just so; and though P—— has but little poet's stuff in him—*he will fall like one of the mighty* I suppose. But it is better turn one's thoughts another way: if death forbears to call till sorrow is at an end, *my* life is surely in no present danger; and P—— has two pretty boys to succeed him, die when he will.

It is very much to your credit, and more so to that of the world, that it does not forsake you: I have often heard you say, that there was very little general ingratitude to be complained of; and it is but right that the conduct of mankind towards him who says so—should confirm it.

I was among the first to offer my service on the new occasion, as I had been the last to desert it on the old one: but my own case now claims more attention than I have to bestow upon it; and though the child is safe, she is not yet well; her illness added to my own, was very difficult to bear.

You should be more willing than you are to think about air ballons. The first *sailing chariot* I ever read of was in *Rasselas*; and the French seem now fully of your mechanist's mind, that only idleness and ignorance need to crawl upon the ground.

Your young correspondents would do well to write often, and obtain from you in return such letters as may benefit their minds in present, and gratify their vanity in future: I wish them to divert themselves and you by questions, which you would willingly answer; and beg that their neg-

ligence of such an advantage as your readiness to correspond with them, may not be charged on,

Dear Sir,

Your faithful Servant,

H. L. T H R A L E.

L E T T E R C C C X L V .

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

London, April 15, 1784.

YESTERDAY I had the pleasure of giving another dinner to the remainder of the old club. We used to meet weekly about the year fifty, and we were as cheerful as in former times; only I could not make quite so much noise; for since the paralytick affliction, my voice is sometimes weak.

Metcalf and Crutchley, without knowing each other, are both members of parliament for Horsham in Suffex. Mr. Cator is chosen for Ipswich.

But a sick man's thoughts soon turn back upon himself. I am still very weak, though my appetite is keen, and my digestion potent; and I gratify myself more at table than ever I did at my own cost before. I have now an inclination to luxury which even your table did not excite; for till now my talk was more about the dishes than
my

my thoughts. I remember you commended me for seeming pleased with my dinners when you had reduced your table; I am able to tell you with great veracity, that I never knew when the reduction began, nor should have known that it was made, had not you told me. I now think and consult to-day what I shall eat to-morrow. This disease likewise will I hope be cured. For there are other things, how different! which ought to predominate in the mind of such a man as I: but in this world the body will have its part; and my hope is, that it shall have no more. My hope but not my confidence; I have only the timidity of a Christian to determine, not the wisdom of a Stoick to secure me.

I hope all my dears are well. They should not be too nice in requiring letters. If my sweet Queeney writes more letters like her last, when franks come in again I will correct them and return them.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

260 LETTERS TO AND FROM

LETTER CCCXLVI.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

London, April 19, 1784.

I RECEIVED in the morning your magnificent fish, and in the afternoon your apology for not sending it. I have invited the Hooles and Miss Burney to dine upon it to-morrow.

The club which has been lately instituted is at Sam's; and there was I when I was last out of the house. But the people whom I mentioned in my letter are the remnant of a little club that used to meet in Ivy Lane about three-and-thirty years ago, out of which we have lost Hawkesworth and Dyer, the rest are yet on this side the grave. Our meetings now are serious, and I think on all parts tender.

Miss Moore has written a poem called *Le Bas Bleu*; which is in my opinion a very great performance. It wanders about in manuscript, and surely will soon find its way to Bath.

I shall be glad of another letter from my dear Queeney; the former was not much to be censured. The reckoning between me and Miss Sophy is out of my head. She must write to tell me how it stands.

I am sensible of the ease that your repayment of Mr. * * * * * has given; you felt yourself *genée* by that debt; is there an English word for it?

As you do not now use your books, be pleased to let Mr. Cator know that I may borrow what I want. I think at present to take only Calmet,
and

and the Greek Anthology. When I lay sleepless, I used to drive the night along by turning Greek epigrams into Latin.

I know not if I have not turned a hundred.

It is time to return you thanks for your present. Since I was sick, I know not if I have not had more delicacies sent me than I had ever seen till I saw your table.

It was always Dr. Heberden's enquiry, whether my appetite for food continued. It indeed never failed me; for he considered the cessation of appetite as the despair of nature yielding up her power to the force of the disease.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCCXLVII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

London, April 21, 1784.

I MAKE haste to send you intelligence, which, if I do not still flatter myself, you will not receive without some degree of pleasure. After a confinement of one hundred twenty-nine days, more than the third part of a year, and no inconsiderable part of human life, I this day returned thanks to God in St. Clement's church, for my recovery; a recovery, in my seventy-fifth year, from a dis-
temper

temper which few in the vigour of youth are known to surmount; a recovery, of which neither myself, my friends, nor my physicians, had any hope; for though they flattered me with some continuance of life, they never supposed that I could cease to be dropfical. The dropfy however is quite vanished, and the asthma so much mitigated, that I walked to-day with a more easy respiration than I have known, I think, for perhaps two years past. I hope the mercy that lengthens my days, will assist me to use them well.

The Hooles, Miss Burney, and Mrs. Hull (Wesley's sister), feasted yesterday with me very cheerfully on your noble salmon. Mr. Allen could not come, and I sent him a piece, and a great tail is still left.

Dr. Brocklesby forbids the club at present, not caring to venture the chillness of the evening; but I purpose to shew myself on Saturday at the Academy's feast. I cannot publish my return to the world more effectually; for, as the Frenchman says, *tout le monde s'y trouvera*.

For this occasion I ordered some cloaths; and was told by the taylor, that when he brought me a sick dress, he never expected to make me any thing of any other kind. My recovery is indeed wonderful.

I am, dear Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R CCCXLVIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

MADAM,

London, April 26, 1784.

ON Saturday I shewed myself again to the living world at the Exhibition; much and splendid was the company: but like the Doge of Genoa at Paris, I admired nothing but myself. I went up all the stairs to the pictures without stopping to rest or to breathe,

“ In all the madness of superfluous health.”

The Prince of Wales had promised to be there; but when we had waited an hour and half, sent us word that he could not come.

My cough still torments me; but it is only a cough, and much less oppressive than some of former times, but it disturbs my nights.

Mrs. Davenant called to pay me a guinea; but I gave two for you. Whatever reasons you have for frugality, it is not worth while to save a guinea a-year by withdrawing it from a publick charity.

I know not whether I told you that my old friend Mrs. Cotterel, now no longer Miss, has called to see me. Mrs. Lewis is not well.

Mrs. Davenant says, that you regain your health. That you regain your health is more than a common recovery; because I infer, that you regain your peace of mind. Settle your thoughts and controul your imagination, and think no more of Hesperian felicity. Gather yourself and your children into a little system, in which each may promote

mote the ease, the safety, and the pleasure of the rest.

Mr. Howard called on me a few days ago, and gave the new edition, much enlarged, of his Account of Prisons. He has been to survey the prisons on the continent; and in Spain he tried to penetrate the dungeons of the Inquisition, but his curiosity was very imperfectly gratified. At Madrid they shut him quite out; at Valladolid they shewed him some publick rooms.

While I am writing, the post has brought your kind letter. Do not think with dejection of your own condition; a little patience will probably give you health, it will certainly give you riches, and all the accommodations that riches can procure.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCCXLIX.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

NOW I am broken loose, my friends seem willing enough to see me. On Monday I dined with Paradise; Tuesday, Hoole; Wednesday, Dr. Taylor; to-day, with Jodrel; Friday, Mrs. Garrick; Saturday, Dr. Brocklesby; next Monday, Dilly.

But I do not now drive the world about; the world drives or draws me. I am very weak; the old distress of sleeplessness comes again upon me. I have however one very strong basis of health, an eager appetite and strong digestion.

Queency's letter I expected before now: Susy is likewise in debt. I believe I am in debt to Sophy, but the dear Loves ought not to be too rigorous.

Dr. Taylor has taken St. Margaret's, in Westminster, vacant by Dr. Wilson's death: how long he will keep it I cannot guess: it is of no great value, and its income consists much of voluntary contributions.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

London,
Thursday, May 13, 1784.

You never date fully.

LETTER CCCL.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

London, May 31, 1784.

WHY you expected me to be better than I am I cannot imagine: I am better than any that saw me in my illness ever expected to have seen me again. I am however at a great distance from health,

health, very weak and very asthmatick, and troubled with my old nocturnal distresses; so that I am little asleep in the night, and in the day too little awake.

I have one way or other been disappointed hitherto of that change of air, from which I think some relief may possibly be obtained; but Boswel and I have settled our resolution to go to Oxford on Thursday. But since I was at Oxford, my convivial friend Dr. Edwards and my learned friend Dr. Wheeler are both dead, and my probabilities of pleasure are very much diminished. Why, when so many are taken away, have I been yet spared! I hope that I may be fitter to die.

How long we shall stay at Oxford, or what we shall do when we leave it, neither Boszy nor I have yet settled; he is for his part resolved to remove his family to London and try his fortune at the English bar: let us all wish him success.

Think of me, if you can, with tenderness.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R CCCLI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

London, June 17, 1784.

I RETURNED last night from Oxford after a fortnight's abode with Dr. Adams, who treated me as well as I could expect or wish; and he that contents a sick man, a man whom it is impossible to please, has surely done his part well. I went in the common vehicle with very little fatigue, and came back I think with less. My stomach continues good, and according to your advice I spare neither asparagus nor peas, and hope to do good execution upon all the summer fruits. But my nights are bad, very bad; the asthma attacks me often, and the dropsy is watching an opportunity to return. I hope I have checked it, but great caution must be used, and indeed great caution is not a high price for health or ease.

What I shall do next I know not; all my schemes of rural pleasure have been some way or other disappointed. I have now some thought of Lichfield and Ashbourne. Let me know, dear Madam, your destination.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R

L E T T E R CCCLII.

To Mrs. T. H. R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

London, June 26, 1784.

THIS morning I saw Mr. Lysons: he is an agreeable young man, and likely enough to do all that he designs. I received him as one sent by you has a right to be received, and I hope he will tell you that he was satisfied; but the initiatory conversation of two strangers is seldom pleasing or instructive to any great degree, and ours was such as other occasions of the same kind produce.

A message came to me yesterday to tell me that Macbean, after three days of illness, is dead of a suppression of urine. He was one of those who, as Swift says, *stood as a screen between me and death*. He was very pious; he was very innocent; he did no ill; and of doing good a continual tenour of distress allowed him few opportunities; he was very highly esteemed in the house.

Write to me if you can some words of comfort. My dear girls seem all to forget me.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R

LETTER CCCLIII.

Mrs. PIOZZI to Dr. JOHNSON.

MY DEAR SIR,

Bath, June 30.

THE enclosed is a circular letter which I have sent to all the guardians, but our friendship demands somewhat more; it requires that I should beg your pardon for concealing from you a connexion which you must have heard of by many, but I suppose never believed. Indeed, my dear Sir, it was concealed only to save us both needless pain; I could not have borne to reject that counsel it would have killed me to take, and I only tell you now because all is irrevocably settled and out of your power to prevent. I will say however, that the dread of your disapprobation has given me some anxious moments, and though perhaps I am become by many privations the most independent woman in the world, I feel as if acting without a parent's consent till you write kindly to

Your faithful servant.

LETTER

L E T T E R CCCLIV.

To Mrs. P I O Z Z I.

DEAR MADAM,

London, July 8, 1784.

WHAT you have done, however I may lament it, I have no pretence to resent, as it has not been injurious to me: I therefore breathe out one sigh more of tenderness, perhaps useless, but at least sincere.

I wish that God may grant you every blessing, that you may be happy in this world for its short continuance, and eternally happy in a better state; and whatever I can contribute to your happiness I am very ready to repay, for that kindness which soothed twenty years of a life radically wretched.

Do not think slightly of the advice which I now presume to offer. Prevail upon Mr. Piozzi to settle in England: you may live here with more dignity than in Italy, and with more security: your rank will be higher, and your fortune more under your own eye. I desire not to detail all my reasons, but every argument of prudence and interest is for England; and only some phantoms of imagination seduce you to Italy.

I am afraid however that my counsel is vain, yet I have eased my heart by giving it.

When

When Queen Mary took the resolution of sheltering herself in England, the Archbishop of St. Andrew's, attempting to dissuade her, attended on her journey; and when they came to the irremeable stream that separated the two kingdoms, and walked by her side into the water, in the middle of which he seized her bridle, and with earnestness proportioned to her danger and his own affection pressed her to return. The Queen went forward.—If the parallel reaches thus far, may it go no farther.—The tears stand in my eyes.

I am going into Derbyshire, and hope to be followed by your good wishes, for I am, with great affection,

Your, &c.

Any letters that come for me hither will be sent me.

AFTER

AFTER having finished the selection of Doctor Johnson's Letters to myself, and after having silently lamented that he who had written them would write no more;—after having passed likewise the painful task of reviewing in my own letters what Spenser so pathetically terms

Many an old sorrow, which made a new breach!

I found myself unexpectedly favoured by the good-nature of those, to whose confidence or kindness I could have formed *no* pretensions, for some variety of entertainment to the Public. In the Letters addressed to Miss Boothby they will perhaps be less struck with the Author's excellence than with that of the Lady, for whom he professes and for whom I know he felt such profound veneration. His powers of expression are already sufficiently known, but to deserve such reverence is more difficult than to express it; nor was Doctor Johnson at any period of his life inclined to pay excessive praise where he did not think he had found uncommon merit, A Hebrew Grammar, or the sketch of one composed for her own use, and written in a character eminently beautiful, has been preserved by her family as a specimen of her literature; and that she has been tenderly recollected by relations who were very young when she died, this elegant Epitaph, written by Brooke Boothby, Esq. may serve as an agreeable proof.

SACRED

SACRED TO THE MEMORY

OF

HILL BOOTHBY,

ONLY DAUGHTER OF BROOKE BOOTHBY AND
ELIZABETH FITZHERBERT,

BORN OCT. 27 1708, DIED JAN. 16, 1756.

Could beauty, learning, talents, virtue, save,
From the dark confines of th' insatiate grave,
This frail memorial had not ask'd a tear
O'er HILL's cold relics sadly mouldering here.
Friendship's chaste flame her ardent bosom fir'd,
And bright religion's all her soul inspir'd;
Her soul, too heavenly for an house of clay,
Soon wore its earth-built fabrick to decay;
In the last struggles of departing breath
She saw her Saviour gild the bed of death;
Heard his mild accents, tun'd to peace and love,
Give glorious welcome to the realms above;
In those bright regions, that celestial shore,
Where friends long lost shall meet to part no more;
"Blest Lord, I come! my hopes have not been
vain:"

Upon her lifeless cheek extatic smiles remain.

The sincerity and fervour of this lady's piety
drove her, as her best friends acknowledge, to
enthusiasm, and those people of course obtained

most of her confidence who professed superior warmth of devotion, or affected peculiar sanctity of manners. But if it is weakness to be imposed on by hypocrisy in others, let those only claim a right to ridicule such weakness who have never been duped by it themselves; who deaf to all suggestions of indolence, avarice, or amorous passion, have never been lulled to the loss of fame by any interested promoters of an idle life, or stimulated to the ruin of an affluent fortune by projectors, who promised to swell it into an enormous one.

Among these enviable heroes of impregnable caution our Doctor never did pretend to rank himself; his publick writings, private letters, and secret meditations, alike confess that he passed many hours in imposing upon himself, and many more in self-condemnation, for having suffered himself to have been so imposed upon. Every acquaintance possesses some anecdote, confirming his earnest desire and daily resolution to attain by diligence that christian perfection which flies from human approach, and escapes the grasp even of the wise and good; like the Deity in Homer that calls from the cloud, and checks the warrior who wishes to pierce it, in words translated thus by Mr. Pope:

Oh, son of Tydeus, cease; be wise and see
How vast the difference 'twixt the gods and thee!

That immeasurable distance was indeed I think scarce ever more discernible than when he quarrelled with his truest friend Dr. Taylor of Ashbourne, for recommending to him a degree of temperance, by which alone his life could have been saved, and recommending it in his own unaltered phrase too, with praise-worthy intentions to impress it more forcibly.

This

This quarrel however, if quarrel it might be called, which was mere fullness on one side and sorrow on the other, soon healed of itself, mutual reproaches having never been permitted to widen the breach, and supply, as is the common practice among coarser disputants, the original and perhaps almost forgotten cause of dispute.

After some weeks, Johnson sent to request the sight of his old companion, whose feeble health *held him away* for some weeks more, and who when he came, urged that feebleness as an excuse for appearing no sooner at the call of friendship in distress; but Johnson, who was then, as he expressed it, not sick but dying, told him a story of a lady, who many years before lay expiring in such tortures as that cruel disease a cancer naturally produces, and begged the conversation of her earliest intimate to soothe the incredible sufferings of her body, and relieve the approaching terrors of her mind: but what was the friend's apology for absence? "Oh, my dear," said she, "I have really been so plagued and so pained of late by a nasty *whitlow*, that indeed it was quite impossible for me till to-day to attend my Lucy's call." I think this was not more than two days before his dissolution.

Some Lichfield friends fancied that he had half a mind to die where he was born, but that the hope of being buried in Westminster Abbey overpowered the inclination; but Mr. Johnson loved London, and many people then in London, whom I doubt not he sincerely wished to see again, particularly Mr. Saftres, for whose person some of the following letters manifest a strong affection, and of whose talents I have often heard him speak with great esteem. That gentleman has told me, that his fears of death ended with his hope of recovery, and that the latter

days of his life passed in calm resignation to God's will, and a firm trust in his mercy.

He burned many letters in the last week I am told, and those written by his mother drew from him a flood of tears, when the paper they were written on was all consumed. Mr. Sastres saw him cast a melancholy look upon their ashes, which he took up and examined, to see if a word was still legible. Nobody has ever mentioned what became of Miss Aston's letters, though he once told me himself, they should be the last papers he would destroy, and added these lines with a very faltering voice :

Then from his closing eye thy form shall part,
And the last pang shall tear thee from his heart ;
Life's idle bus'ness at gasp be o'er,
The Muse forgot, and thou be lov'd no more.

The high opinion he had formed, and the prodigious value he always retained for his wife, is preserved in a funeral sermon, written on her death, of which it is no more than bare justice to aver, that Père Bourdaloue has done nothing finer. Sublimity and tenderness mingle in his praises, religion and morality inspire every precept, and produce from the extinction even of a common life, marked as I am told by no superiority during its continuance, inferences, of power at once to animate the coldest in the pursuit of perfection, and to restrain the most petulant from arrogance of ill-founded hope.

That such a desirable publication has been hitherto withheld from the press, we owe to Dr. Taylor's scrupulous delicacy. When Mrs. Johnson died, her husband requested *him* to compose her *Oraison Funebre*, which the friend refused upon this honourable principle, that he would not commend a character he little esteemed. Doctor
Johnson

Johnson then sat down, and composed the sermon I have read; and begged Taylor to preach it if he would do nothing more; but even this he objected to, for the reason he had already given, and provoked the writer to tear the manuscript, which was carefully put together again and copied fair, but which the Doctor still persists to withhold from publication, because he thinks the person undeserving of the panegyrick it contains.

I have the honour to print in this collection a letter of gallantry, addressed to another lady, who desires that her name may remain concealed, though few people except herself, who had as much pretension to be praised, would have had modesty enough to retire from being known. These obliging contributors have indeed forced me once more to obtrude myself upon the publick, and to talk with a tired tongue upon a half-forgotten topick; as among the freezing echoes of Nova Zembla it is said, that we may hear in the following winter some scraps of that conversation which engaged us a twelvemonth before. Had much of this been omitted, I had certainly left less for criticks to censure, or for friends to forgive: the publick however has been still indulgent, though individuals have been spiteful, and

Non nimium curo; nam cœnæ fercula nostræ
Malim convivis quam placuisse cocis.

Doctor Johnson was no complainer of ill usage: I never heard him even lament the disregard shewn to Irene, which however was a violent favourite with him, and much was he offended when having asked me once, "what single scene afforded me most pleasure of all our tragick drama;" I, little thinking of *his* play's existence, named, perhaps
with

with hasty impropriety, “the dialogue between Syphax and Juba, in Addison’s *Cato*.” Nay, nay, replied he, if you are for declamation, I hope my two ladies have the better of them all. This piece however lay dormant many years, *shelved* (in the manager’s phrase) from the time Mr. Peter Garrick presented it first on Fleetwood’s table, to the hour when his brother David obtained due influence on the theatre, on which it crawled through nine nights, *supported by cordials*, but never obtaining popular applause. I asked him then to name a better scene; he pitched on that between Horatio and Lothario, in Rowe’s *Fair Penitent*; but Mr. Murphy shewed him afterwards that it was borrowed from Massinger, and had not the merit of originality.

It is well known that Johnson despised the profession of an actor: when Garrick was talked of as candidate for admission into the Literary Club many years ago,—If he *does* apply, says our Doctor to Mr. Thrale, I’ll black-ball him. “Who, Sir? Mr. Garrick, your friend, your companion,—black-ball *him!*” Why, Sir, I love my little David dearly, better than all or any of his flatterers do, but surely one ought to fit in a society like ours.

Unelbow’d by a gamester, pimp or play’r.

In spite of this ill-founded contempt, he persuaded himself to treat Mrs. Siddons with great politeness, and said when she called on him at Bolt-court, and Frank could not immediately provide her with a chair, “You see, Madam, where—“ ever *you* go there are no *seats* to be got.” Johnson’s readiness was indeed conspicuous above all his other uncommon powers. I asked him one day, why the *Idlers* were published without mottoes? he

he replied, that it was forborne the better to conceal himself and escape discovery: But let us think of some now, said he, for the next edition; we can fit the two volumes in two hours, can't we? Accordingly he recollected, and I wrote down these following, till some friend coming in, in about five minutes, put an end to our further progress on the subject, nor did I ever again see the card they were written on till two or three weeks ago.

Motto for the paper of the Bracelet. No. 39.

*Nec genus ornatus unum, quod quamque decebit
Eligat.* OVID. Ars Amat. 3. 135.

For the Anatomical Novices. No. 17.

Stirge tandem Carnifex.

MECÆNAS TO AUGUSTUS.

For No. 88.

Hodie quid egisti?

For the paper about the Debtors. No. 22.

*Ob nomen dulce libertatis! Ob jus eximium nostræ
civitatis!* CICERO.

For Tim Ranger's Letters. No. 62. 64.

Quid faciam? præscribe.

Quiescas.

HOR.

For Omar the Prudent. No. 101.

Carpe hilaris — fuget heu! non revocanda dies.

For Hacho, King of Lapland. No. 96.

*Qui se volet esse potentem,
Animos domet ille feroces:*

I

Nec

*Nec victa libidine colla,
Fædis submittat hæbenis.* BOETHIUS.

For Dick Shifter. No. 71.

*Celan le selve angui, leoni ed orgi
Dentro il lor verde.* AMINTA del TASSO.

For Molly Quick. No. 46.

Fugit ad salices, sed se cupit ante videri. VIRG.

And now what remains? after having reviewed the letters of a dead friend, whose lips while living breathed sentences of instruction, surpassed by those of no *un*-inspired teacher, and whose writings called in elegance to adorn, and erudition to engrave those precepts; whose life passed in the practice of refined morality, ending in a death which attested the purest faith; what remains but to reflect, that by that death no part of Johnson perished which had power by form to recommend his real excellence; nothing that did not disgrace the soul which it contained: like some fine statue, the boast of Greece and Rome, plastered up into deformity, while casts are preparing from it to improve students, and diffuse the knowledge of its merit; but dazzling only with complete perfection, when the gross and awkward covering is removed.

L E T T E R CCCLV.

Dr. JOHNSON to Miss BOOTHBY.

DEAREST MADAM,

January 1, 1755.

THOUGH I am afraid your illness leaves you little leisure for the reception of airy civilities, yet I cannot forbear to pay you my congratulations on the new year; and to declare my wishes, that your years to come may be many and happy. In this wish indeed I include myself, who have none but you on whom my heart reposes; yet surely I wish your good, even though your situation were such as should permit you to communicate no gratifications to,

Dearest, dearest Madam,

Your, &c.



L E T T E R CCCLVI.

To the Same.

DEAREST MADAM,

Jan. 3, 1755.

NOBODY but you can recompense me for the distress which I suffered on Monday night.
Having

Having engaged Dr. Lawrence to let me know, at whatever hour, the state in which he left you; I concluded when he staid so long, that he staid to see my dearest expire. I was composing myself as I could to hear what yet I hoped not to hear, when his servant brought me word that you were better. Do you continue to grow better? Let my dear little Miss inform me on a card. I would not have you write lest it should hurt you, and consequently hurt likewise,

Dearest Madam,

Your, &c.



L E T T E R CCCLVII.

To the Same.

DEAR MADAM,

Dec. 30, 1755.

IT is again midnight, and I am again alone. With what meditation shall I amuse this waste hour of darkness and vacuity? If I turn my thoughts upon myself, what do I perceive but a poor helpless being, reduced by a blast of wind to weakness and misery? How my present distemper was brought upon me I can give no account, but impute it to some sudden succession of cold to heat; such as in the common road of life cannot be avoided, and against which no precaution can be taken.

Of

Of the fallaciousness of hope, and the uncertainty of schemes, every day gives some new proof; but it is seldom heeded, till something rather felt than seen, awakens attention. This illness, in which I have suffered something and feared much more, has depressed my confidence and elation; and made me consider all that I have promised myself, as less certain to be attained or enjoyed. I have endeavoured to form resolutions of a better life; but I form them weakly, under the consciousness of an external motive. Not that I conceive a time of sickness a time improper for recollection and good purposes, which I believe diseases and calamities often sent to produce, but because no man can know how little his performance will answer to his promises; and designs are nothing in human eyes till they are realised by execution.

Continue, my Dearest, your prayers for me, that no good resolution may be vain. You think, I believe, better of me than I deserve. I hope to be in time what I wish to be; and what I have hitherto satisfied myself too readily with only wishing.

Your billet brought me what I much wished to have, a proof that I am still remembered by you at the hour in which I most desire it!

The Doctor is anxious about you. He thinks you too negligent of yourself; if you will promise to be cautious, I will exchange promises, as we have already exchanged injunctions. However, do not write to me more than you can easily bear; do not interrupt your ease to write at all.

Mr. Fitzherbert sent to-day to offer me some wine; the people about me say I ought to accept it, I shall therefore be obliged to him if he will send me a bottle.

There has gone about a report that I died to-day, which I mention, lest you should hear it and be

be alarmed. You see that I think my death may alarm you ; which for me is to think very highly of earthly friendship. I believe it arose from the death of one of my neighbours. You know Des Cartes's argument, " I think, therefore I am." It is as good a consequence, " I write, therefore I am alive." I might give another, " I am alive, therefore I love Miss Boothby ;" but that I hope our friendship may be of far longer duration than life.

I am, dearest Madam,

with sincere affection,

Your, &c.



LETTER CCCLVIII.

To the Same.

MY SWEET ANGEL,

Dec. 31.

I HAVE read your book, I am afraid you will think without any great improvement ; whether you can read my notes I know not. You ought not to be offended ; I am perhaps as sincere as the writer. In all things that terminate here I shall be much guided by your influence, and should take or leave by your direction ; but I cannot receive my religion from any human hand. I desire
fire

fire however to be instructed, and am far from thinking myself perfect.

I beg you to return the book when you have looked into it. I should not have written what is in the margin, had I not had it from you, or had I not intended to shew it you.

It affords me a new conviction, that in these books there is little new, except new forms of expression; which may be sometimes taken, even by the writer, for new doctrines.

I sincerely hope that God, whom you so much desire to serve aright, will bless you, and restore you to health, if he sees it best. Surely no human understanding can pray for any thing temporal otherwise than conditionally. Dear Angel, do not forget me. My heart is full of tenderness.

It has pleased God to permit me to be much better; which I believe will please you.

Give me leave, who have thought much on medicine, to propose to you an easy, and I think a very probable remedy for indigestion and lubricity of the bowels. Dr. Lawrence has told me your case. Take an ounce of dried orange-peel finely powdered, divide it into scruples, and take one scruple at a time in any manner; the best way is perhaps to drink it in a glass of hot red port, or to eat it first and drink the wine after it. If you mix cinnamon or nutmeg with the powder, it were not worse; but it will be more bulky, and so more troublesome. This is a medicine not disgusting, not costly, easily tried, and if not found useful, easily left off.

I would not have you offer it to the Doctor as mine. Physicians do not love intruders; yet do not take it without his leave. But do not be easily put off, for it is in my opinion very likely to help you, and not likely to do you harm; do not take too much in haste; a scruple once in three hours,
or

or about five scruples a day, will be sufficient to begin, or less, if you find any aversion. I think using sugar with it might be bad; if syrup, use old syrup of quinces: but even that I do not like. I should think better of conserve of floes. Has the Doctor mentioned the bark? in powder you could hardly take it; perhaps you might take the infusion.

Do not think me troublesome, I am full of care. I love you and honour you; and am very unwilling to lose you.

A Dieu je vous recommande.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

My compliments to my dear Miss.



LETTER CCCLIX.

To the Same.

DEAREST DEAR,

Saturday.

I AM extremely obliged to you for the kindness of your enquiry. After I had written to you, Dr. Lawrence came, and would have given some oil and sugar, but I took Rhenish and water, and recovered my voice. I yet cough much, and sleep ill. I have been visited by another Doctor

Doctor to-day; but I laughed at his Balsam of Peru. I fasted on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, and felt neither hunger nor faintness. I have dined yesterday and to-day, and found little refreshment. I am not much amiss; but can no more sleep than if my dearest lady were angry at,

Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCCLX.

To the Same.

HONOURED MADAM,

January 8, 1756.

I BEG of you to endeavour to live. I have returned your *Law*, which however I earnestly entreat you to give me. I am in great trouble; if you can write three words to me, be pleased to do it. I am afraid to say much, and cannot say nothing when my dearest is in danger.

The all-merciful God have mercy on you.

I am, Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R

L E T T E R CCCLXI.

Dr. JOHNSON to Miss * * * * *

MADAM,

July 19, 1755.

I KNOW not how liberally your generosity would reward those who should do you any service, when you can so kindly acknowledge a favour which I intended only to myself. That accidentally hearing that you were in town, I made haste to enjoy an interval of pleasure which I found would be short, was the natural consequence of that self-love which is always busy in quest of happiness; of that happiness which we often miss when we think it near, and sometimes find when we imagine it lost. When I had missed you, I went away disappointed; and did not know that my vexation would be so amply repaid by so kind a letter. A letter indeed can but imperfectly supply the place of its writer, at least of such a writer as you; and a letter which makes me still more desire your presence, is but a weak consolation under the necessity of living longer without you: with this however I must be for a time content, as much content at least as discontent will suffer me; for Mr. Barretti being a single being in this part of the world, and entirely clear from all engagements, takes the advantage of his independence, and will come before me; for which if I could blame him, I should punish him; but my own heart tells me, that he only does to me, what, if I could, I should do to him.

I hope Mrs. —, when she came to her favourite place, found her house dry, and her woods growing,

growing, and the breeze whistling, and the birds singing, and her own heart dancing. And for you, Madam, whose heart cannot yet dance to such musick, I know not what to hope; indeed I could hope every thing that would please you, except that perhaps the absence of higher pleasures is necessary to keep some little place vacant in your remembrance for,

Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCCLXII.

Dr. JOHNSON to J—— S—— Esq.

DEAR SIR,

COMMUNICATE your letters regularly. Your father's inexorability not only grieves but amazes me. He is your father. He was always accounted a wise man; nor do I remember any thing to the disadvantage of his good nature; but in his refusal to assist you, there is neither good nature, fatherhood, nor wisdom.

It is the practice of good nature to overlook faults which have already by the consequence punished the delinquent. It is natural for a father to think more favourably than others of children; and it is always wise to give assistance, while a little help will prevent the necessity of greater.

If you married imprudently, you married at your own hazard, at an age when you had a right of choice. It would be hard if the man might not chuse his own wife who has a right to plead before the judges of his country.

If your imprudence has ended in difficulties and inconveniencies, you are yourself to support them; and with the help of a little better health you would support them, and conquer them.

Surely that want which accident and sickness produce is to be supported in every region of humanity, though there were neither friends nor fathers in the world. You have certainly from your father the highest claim of charity, though none of right; and therefore I would counsel you, to omit no decent nor manly degree of importunity.

Your debts in the whole are not large; and of the *whole*, but a small part is troublesome. Small debts are like small shot; they are rattling on every side, and can scarcely be escaped without a wound. Great debts are like cannon of loud noise but little danger; you must therefore be enabled to discharge petty demands, that you may have leisure with security to struggle with the rest. Neither the great nor little debts disgrace you. I am sure you have my esteem; for the courage with which you contracted them, and the spirit with which you endure them. I wish my esteem could be of more use.

I have been invited, or have invited myself, to several parts of the kingdom; and will not incommode my dear Lucy, by coming to Lichfield while her present lodging is of any use to her. I hope in a few days to be at leisure, and to make visits. Whither I shall fly is matter of no importance; a man unconnected is at home every where, unless he may be said to be at home no where. I am
sorry,

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 291

forry, dear Sir, that where you have parents, a man of your merits should not have a home. I wish I could give it you.

I am, Dear Sir,

Affectionately your's.

L E T T E R CCCLXIII.

DR. JOHNSON to Mr. SASTRES.

DEAR SIR,

Ashbourne, August 21, 1784.

I AM glad that a letter has at last reached you; what became of the two former, which were directed to *Mortimer* instead of *Margaret* Street, I have no means of knowing, nor is it worth the while to enquire; they neither inclosed bills, nor contained secrets.

My health was for some time quite at a stand, if it did not rather go backwards; but for a week past it flatters me with appearances of amendment, which I dare yet hardly credit. My breath has been certainly less obstructed for eight days; and yesterday the water seemed to be disposed to a fuller flow. But I get very little sleep; and my legs do not like to carry me.

You were kind in paying my forfeits at the club; it cannot be expected that many should meet in the summer, however they that continue in town should keep up appearances as well as they can. I hope to be again among you.

I wish you had told me distinctly the mistakes in the French words. The French is but a secondary and subordinate part of your design; exactness, however, in all parts is necessary, though complete exactness cannot be attained; and the French are so well stocked with dictionaries, that a little attention may easily keep you safe from gross faults; and as you work on, your vigilance will be quickened, and your observation regulated; you will better know your own wants, and learn better whence they may be supplied. Let me know minutely the whole state of your negotiations. Dictionaries are like watches, the worst is better than none, and the best cannot be expected to go quite true.

The weather here is very strange summer weather; and we are here two degrees nearer the north than you. I was I think loath to think a fire necessary in July, till I found one in the servants hall, and thought myself entitled to as much warmth as them.

I wish you would make it a task to yourself to write to me twice a week; a letter is a great relief to,

Dear Sir,

Your, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R CCCLXIV.

To the Same.

DEAR SIR,

Ashbourne, Sept. 2, 1784.

YOUR critick seems to me to be an exquisite Frenchman; his remarks are nice; they would at least have escaped me. I wish you better luck with your next specimen; though if such slips as these are to condemn a dictionary, I know not when a dictionary will be made. I cannot yet think that *gourmander* is wrong; but I have here no means of verifying my opinion.

My health, by the mercy of God, still improves; and I have hope of standing the English winter, and of seeing you, and reading Petrarch at Bolt-court; but let me not flatter myself too much. I am yet weak, but stronger than I was.

I suppose the club is now almost forsaken: but we shall I hope meet again. We have lost poor Allen; a very worthy man, and to me a very kind and officious neighbour.

Of the pieces ascribed by Bembo to Virgil, the *Dirce* (ascribed I think to Valerius Cato), the *Copa* and the *Moretum* are, together with the *Culex* and *Ceiris*, in Scaliger's *Appendix ad Virgilium*. The rest I never heard the name of before.

I am highly pleased with your account of the gentleman and lady with whom you lodge; such characters have sufficient attractions to draw me towards them; you are lucky to light upon them in the casual commerce of life.

Continue, dear Sir, to write to me; and let me hear any thing or nothing, as the chance of the day may be.

I am, Sir, Your, &c.

L E T T E R

LETTER CCCLXV.

To the Same.

DEAR SIR,

Ashbourne, Sept. 16, 1784.

WHAT you have told me of your landlord and his lady at Brompton, has made them such favourites, that I am not sorry to hear how you are turned out of your lodgings, because the good is greater to them than the evil is to you.

The death of dear Mr. Allen gave me pain. When after some time of absence I visit a town, I find my friends dead; when I leave a place, I am followed with intelligence, that the friend whom I hope to meet at my return is swallowed in the grave. This is a gloomy scene; but let us learn from it to prepare for our own removal. Allen is gone; Sastres and Johnson are hastening after him; may we be both as well prepared!

I again wish your next specimen success. *Pay-mistress* can hardly be said without a preface, (it may be expressed by a word perhaps not in use, Pay mistress).

The club is, it seems, totally deserted; but as the forfeits go on, the house does not suffer; and all clubs I suppose are unattended in the summer. We shall I hope meet in winter, and be cheerful.

After this week, do not write to me till you hear again from me, for I know not well where I shall be; I have grown weary of the solitude of this place, and think of removal.

I am, Sir, Your, &c.

L E T T E R CCCLXVI.

To the Same.

S I R,

Lichfield, October 20, 1784.

YOU have abundance of naughty tricks; is this your way of writing to a poor sick friend twice a week? Post comes after post, and brings no letter from Mr. Saftres. If you know any thing, write and tell it; if you know nothing, write and say that you know nothing.

What comes of the specimen? If the booksellers want a specimen, in which a keen critick can spy no faults, they must wait for another generation. Had not the Crusca faults? Did not the Academicians of France commit many faults? It is enough that a dictionary is better than others of the same kind. A perfect performance of any kind is not to be expected, and certainly not a perfect dictionary.

Mrs. Desmoulines never writes, and I know not how things go on at home; tell me, dear Sir, what you can.

If Mr. Seward be in town tell me his direction, for I ought to write to him.

I am very weak, and have bad nights.

I am, dear Sir,,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R

LETTER CCCLXVII.

To the Same.

DEAR SIR,

Lichfield, Nov. 1, 1784.

I BEG you to continue the frequency of your letters; every letter is a cordial; but you must not wonder that I do not answer with exact punctuality. You may always have something to tell: you live among the various orders of mankind, and may make a letter from the exploits, sometimes of the philosopher, and sometimes of the pick-pocket. You see some ballons succeed and some miscarry, and a thousand strange and a thousand foolish things. But I see nothing; I must make my letter from what I feel, and what I feel with so little delight, that I cannot love to talk of it.

I am certainly not to come to town, but do not omit to write; for I know not when I shall come, and the loss of a letter is not much.

I am, dear Sir,

Yours, &c.

END OF THE LETTERS.

P O E M S.

VERSES addressed to Dr. LAWRENCE,
composed by Dr. JOHNSON, as he lay
confined with an inflamed Eye.

*S*ANGUINE dum tumido suffusus flagrat ocellus,
Deliciasque fugit solitas solitosque labores ;
Damnatus tenebris, lectoque affixus inertī,
Quid mecum peragam, quod tu doctissime posses
Laurenti saltem facili, dignarier aure ?
Humanæ mentis, rerum se pascere formis,
Est proprium, et quavis cāptare indagine verum,
Omnibus unus amor, non est modus unus amoris.
Sunt, qui curriculo timidi versantur in arcto,
Quos soli ducunt sensus, solus docet usus ;
Qui sibi sat sapiunt, contenti noscere quantum
Vel digiti tractant, oculus vel sentit et auris :
Tantundem est illis, repleat spatia ardua cæli
Materia, vastum an late pandatur inane.
Scire vices ponti facile est, nihil amplius optant
Nec quærunt quid luna tuo cum fluctibus orbi.
Sit sibi diffusi, lenta experientia cursum
Qua sulcat, reptant tuti per lubrica vitæ.

Altera

*Altera pars hominum, sanctæ rationis alumni
 Permissum credit, nudas sibi sistere causas ;
 Materiemque rudem, magnæque parentis adesse
 Conciliis, verique sacros recludere fontes.
 Gens illa, impatiens per singula quæque vagandi
 Tentat iter brevius, magno conamine summam
 Naturæ invadens, mundique elementa refingens
 Levæa ferratis miscens, quadrata rotundis,
 Corpora cuncta suis gestit variare figuris.
 Particulasque locans certas certo ordine, pulchram
 Campaginem edificat, cælorum atque ætheris ignes.
 Accendit, rerumque modos ac fœdera ponit.
 Hi sunt, quos animi generosa insania magni
 In sublime rapit, queis terra et pontus et aer.
 Sub pedibus subjecta jacent ; queis ultima primis
 Nexa patent ; hi sunt quos nil mirabile turbat
 Nil movet insolitum, sub legibus omnia fictis
 Dum statuunt, causisque audent prefigere metam.*



TRANSLATION of the foregoing VERSES.

By Mrs. PLOZZI.

CONDEMN'D to shun bright Sol's reviving ray,
 While my tir'd sight shrinks at th' approach of day,
 Each pleasing task become my present dread,
 Chain'd down by darkness to a lazy bed ;
 What happy periods, worthy of thy care,
 Oh learned Lawrence! can thy friend prepare!
 'Mong shadowy forms the phantom Truth to find,
 Is still the hope of ev'ry human mind,
 Incln'd by passion all, but variously inclin'd.

Some

Some roll their timid wheel at small expence,
O'er the known track of Custom and of Sense,
Depending on their touch, their taste, their eyes,
Newton alike and Berkeley they despise :
Careless through empty space though planets roll,
Or clust'ring atoms fill the crowded whole ;
Such souls unmov'd can Ocean's wastes survey,
Nor ask what influence its tides obey :
Contented creep in cold Experience' train,
Lurk in the furrow, and neglect the grain.

Others, all glowing with Promethean fire,
Strain their strong pow'rs to search and to enquire ;
Hunt parent Nature to her last recess,
Force her retreats, and rend her sacred dress ;
The source of Truth impatient to pursue,
Her winding paths they scorn, cut out a new,
Form fancy'd scenes of elemental strife,
Exalt material beings into life,
Find neither square, nor round, nor rough amiss ;
All bend before the warm hypothesis ;
Till tortur'd Nature feigning to obey,
Her fires they light, her coruscations play,
Build airy fabricks in th' offended sky,
And term the bold attempt — Discovery.

Such souls sublime see earth, and air, and light,
Stretch'd at their feet, nor wonder at the sight ;
No knot perplexes, and no labour tires,
While thirst of knowledge urges and inspires ;
For Destiny still faithful to his charge,
Conjecture only leaves to rove at large.

TRANSLATIONS from BOETHIUS
DE CONSOLATIONE PHILOSOPHIÆ.

Book II. Metre 2.

THOUGH countless as the grains of sand
That roll at Eurys' loud command;
Though countless as the lamps of night
That glad us with vicarious light;
Fair Plenty, gracious queen, thou'd pour
The blessings of a golden show'r,
Not all the gifts of Fate combin'd
Would ease the hunger of the mind,
But swallowing all the mighty store,
Rapacity would call for more;
For still where wishes most abound
Unquench'd the thirst of gain is found;
In vain the shining gifts are sent,
For none are rich without content.



Book II. Metre 4.

WOULDST thou to some steadfast seat,
Out of Fortune's pow'r retreat?
Wouldst thou, when fierce Eurys blows,
Calmly rest in safe repose?
Wouldst thou see the foaming main,
Tossing rave, but rave in vain?
Shun the mountain's airy brow,
Shun the sea-sapp'd sand below;

Soon

Soon th' aspiring fabrick falls,
 When loud Auster shakes her walls,
 Soon the treach'rous sands retreat,
 From beneath the cumb'rous weight.
 Fix not where the tempting height
 Mingles danger with delight ;
 Safe upon the rocky ground,
 Firm and low thy mansion found ;
 There, 'mid tempests loudest roars,
 Dashing waves and shatter'd shores,
 Thou shalt sit and smile to see
 All the world afraid but thee,
 Lead a long and peaceful age,
 And deride their utmost rage.



Book III. Metre 1.

By Dr. JOHNSON and Mrs. PIOZZI *.

*THE prudent hind, intent on gain,
 Must clear the ground to sow the grain,
 And Ceres' richest gifts abound,
 Where late the rankest weeds were found ;
 To him whom painful tastes annoy,
 Sweet honey yields a double joy ;
 The tempest gives the calm delight,
 The morning owes her charms to night ;
 And thus the mind tormented long
 With wild vicissitudes of wrong,
 Contemns at length the treach'rous toys,
 And real happiness enjoys.*

* The lines printed in *Italics* were written by Mrs. PIOZZI.

Book III. Metre 3.

By Dr. JOHNSON and Mrs. PIOZZI.

THROUGH Gripus' grounds let rich Pactolus roll,
 No golden sands can satisfy his soul;
 Though chains of pearl bow down his pensive head,
 Though a whole hecatomb his acres tread,
 No wealth his life from weary care can save,
 No care his wealth can carry to the grave.



Book III. Metre 4.

By Dr. JOHNSON and Mrs. PIOZZI.

VAINLY the Tyrian purple bright,
 Vainly the pearl's pellucid white,
 The tyrant Nero strove to adorn,
 Who liv'd our hatred and our scorn;
 His choice our sacred seats disgrac'd.
 His conduct human kind debas'd:
 If such on earth can bliss bestow,
 Say, what is happiness below?

Book III. Metre 5.

By Dr. JOHNSON.

THE man who pants for ample sway,
 Must bid his passions all obey;
 Must bid each wild desire be still,
 Nor yoke his reason with his will:
 For though beneath thy haughty brow
 Warm India's supple sons should bow,
 Though northern climes confess thy sway,
 Which erst in frost and freedom lay,
 If Sorrow pine or Avarice crave,
 Bow down and own thyself a slave.



Book III. Metre 6.

By Dr. JOHNSON and Mrs. PIOZZI.

I.

ALL men, throughout the peopled earth,
 From one sublime beginning spring;
 All from one source derive their birth,
 The same their parent and their king.

II.

*At his command proud Titan glows,
 And Luna lifts her horn on high;
 His hand this earth on man bestows,
 And strews with stars the spangled sky.*

III.

III.

From her high seats he drew the soul,
 And in this earthly cage confin'd;
 To wond'ring worlds produc'd the whole,
 Essence divine with matter join'd.

IV.

*Since then alike all men derive
 From God himself their noble race,
 Why should the witless mortals strive
 For vulgar ancestry and place?*

V.

Why boast their birth before his eyes,
 Who holds no human creature mean;
 Save him whose foul enslav'd to Vice,
 Deserts her nobler origin?



Book III. Metre 12.

By Dr. JOHNSON and Mrs. PROZZI.

HAPPY he, whose eyes have view'd
 The transparent Fount of Good;
 Happy whose unfetter'd mind
 Leaves the load of earth behind.
 Though when Orpheus made his moan
 For his lovely consort gone,
 Though the hind approach'd to hear
 Where the lions stood near,
 And attentive to the sound
 Hares forgot the following hound,

Round

Round him danc'd the list'ning woods,
Silent wonder stopt the floods,
Grief and madness unrepres'd,
Rag'd within the master's breast,
While t' assuage the pangs of love,
Verse and musick vainly strove;
Now he sighs to Heav'n, and now
Rushes on the realms below.

*There he breath'd his am'rous fire,
There he touch'd his trembling lyre,
Warbling there his softer sorrows,
From his parent muse he borrows
Notes to touch each tender feeling,
Numbers to each bosom stealing,
Sighs that silent measure keep,
Groans that grieve and words that weep.*

*These the hapless poet tries
To regain his beauteous prize;
Nor in vain—the strings obey,
Love and musick bear the sway,
Cerberus' rage their powers disarm,
Stern Alæto feels the charm,
Tears from fierce Megæra flow;
While attentive to his woe
Suddens stops Ixion's wheel,
Hell's fierce hawk forgets his meal;
Tantalus astonish'd stood,
Scorning now th' o'erflowing flood:
Till at length stern Pluto cried,
Conquering Poet, take thy bride;
Purchas'd by the powerful song,
All her charms to thee belong;
Only this command obey,
Look not on her by the way;
Though reluctant, still refrain,
Till the realms of light you gain.
But what laws can lovers awe?
Love alone to love is law:*

Just emerging into light :
Orpheus turn'd his eager sight,
Fondly view'd his following bride,
Viewing lost, and loving died.

To you whose gen'rous wishes rise
To court communion with the skies,
To you the tale is told,
When grasping bliss th' unsteady mind
Looks back on what she left behind,
She faints, and quits her hold.

F I N I S.



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